

Walesa in early lead

WARSAW (AP) — Outgoing Polish President Lech Walesa was ahead in the second round of the country's presidential vote Sunday with 50.3 per cent of the vote, according to preliminary results given on Polish television. The result was based on an exit poll conducted at 5 p.m. (1600 GMT) by the Obop Institute, which hours before voting ended, which gave Mr. Walesa's rival Aleksander Kwasniewski 49.7 per cent of the vote. The previous round, based on a tally taken at 600 polling stations out of a total of 1,000, had shown Mr. Walesa with a bigger lead and the figure is considered highly likely to vary in the coming hours. Polish television earlier published the results of successive narrowing which showed the gap between the two candidates sounding gradually. Thus at midday Mr. Walesa had been credited with 53.7 per cent of the vote and at 2:00 p.m. with 52.5 per cent. In the first round of voting on Nov. 5, the first estimates published at 1900 GMT placed Mr. Walesa ahead of Mr. Kwasniewski, with the situation reversing just an hour later. The final result gave Mr. Kwasniewski a clear lead of 35.11 per cent compared with 33.11 per cent to Mr. Walesa. Turnout at 4:00 p.m. was estimated at 52.6 per cent (see earlier story inside).

Iraq's parliament speaker dies

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq's Parliamentary Speaker Saad Mahdi Saleh has died after struggling for several months against an incurable illness, the official news agency INA announced Sunday. Mr. Saleh, in his 50s, was speaker of the parliament for the last six years and a leader of the Baath Party which has ruled Iraq since 1968. He was hospitalized in Jordan more than six months ago, suffering from an "incurable illness," INA said, without specifying the nature of his ailment. Paying tribute, the agency said Mr. Saleh's death was "an enormous loss of a great Iraqi leader who was faithful to the principles of the party." Hospital sources in the Jordanian capital, contacted by AFP, said the parliamentary speaker had not returned since treatment six months ago at the King Hussein Medical Centre. In mid-October, Mr. Saleh sent a message of congratulations from hospital in Amman to President Saddam Hussein who won another seven years in power in a nationwide referendum. President Saddam has often praised the speaker as a "militant who is sincere and faithful to the principles of the Baath Party."

15 killed, 60 injured; 3 groups claim responsibility Blast destroys Egypt's embassy in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — A huge blast, believed to be a car bomb, destroyed the Egyptian embassy here Sunday, leaving 15 people dead and nearly 60 injured, officials and witnesses said. In Cairo, three Islamic groups, the Jamaa Islamiyya, Al Jihad and the International Justice Group, claimed responsibility for the attack which was being described by officials here as a possible suicide attack.

The Egyptian embassy, reduced to a mangled heap of steel and concrete, was surrounded by Pakistani troops as a stream of ambulances removed the victims, including several foreign diplomats. Officials and emergency services put the number of dead at 15, including five Egyptians. Police said they feared the toll could rise.

A crane helped workers to clear debris at the battered embassy, as workers dug for people still feared buried. Egyptian Ambassador Mohammad Noman Galal survived almost unhurt. "I was in the building ... My office collapsed," he said. The shock wave from the blast broke windows of nearby buildings in the diplomatic enclave. Two Japanese diplomats and an attaché at their nearby embassy were injured as the force of the blast struck their building, another diplomat said, adding that eight Pakistani employees at the mission were also hurt. Three French nationals and at least three British nationals, including an 18-month-old infant, were injured as window panes in

neighbouring buildings were shattered by the blast. A diplomat, reflecting wide concern in the diplomatic community, said, "if this (blast) can happen at an embassy, anything can happen here." It was the first big blast in the high security diplomatic enclave of the Pakistani capital. "It is a catastrophe," one Arab diplomat added. A witness said he saw a car entering the embassy gates before the explosion which sent up a "big ball of flames and smoke." Security personnel on the scene said more than two dozen vehicles were destroyed. Witnesses said there were two explosions. The first shattered the gate of the embassy. A second stronger

blast followed immediately and was audible all over the sprawling capital. In Cairo, three armed Islamic militant groups claimed responsibility for the blast. "The Jamaa Islamiyya claims responsibility for the explosion at the Egyptian embassy in Islamabad," an unidentified man said in a phone call to an international news agency. The group has spearheaded militant violence in Egypt which has claimed more than 900 lives since 1992 in a drive to overthrow the secular government in Cairo. Another Islamic group, the International Justice Group, also claimed responsibility in a statement to a news agency as did Al Jihad in a telephone call.

Jordan condemns attack

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan Sunday condemned a bomb attack on the Egyptian embassy in Pakistan that killed at least 15 people and injured about 60 others. His Majesty King Hussein, who is now on a working visit to Britain, sent a cable to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak expressing condolences on his behalf and on behalf of the people and government of Jordan over the fall of the victims. The King described the attack as an act of terrorism. "We were deeply pained and angered over reports about the criminal and evil attack at the Egyptian embassy in Islamabad that caused the death and injury of innocent people," King Hussein told Mr. Mubarak. "I strongly condemn this terrorist and hideous attack and reiterate and emphasise the need for fighting off all forms of terrorism and extremism," King Hussein said. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, also condemned the attack in a telephone call to the Egyptian president. The Regent expressed his condolences to the president and the families of the victims. The Regent wished the injured speedy recovery. Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti telephoned his Egyptian counterpart Amr Moussa and told him that Jordan condemned all forms



A Pakistani bomb-disposal squad and police examine the site of a bomb blast at the Egyptian embassy in Islamabad Sunday (AFP photo)

U.S. sets Monday deadline for Bosnian peace decision

DAYTON, Ohio (Agencies) — After 18 full days of intensive negotiations here, the United States Sunday gave Balkan leaders a deadline of a few more hours to make peace or go home to more war. "There is no reason for these negotiations to proceed longer than today," State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns told a news conference. "The time has come to choose between peace and war," he added. Negotiations between the Bosnian, Serbian and Croatian delegations to settle the three-and-a-half-year-old Bosnian war were continuing Sunday, but the core issues are most profound, and there is "a definite chance" the talks will fail, Mr. Burns said. "There is a limit to what we can do (and) to how much time we can spend on this," the spokesman also said. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry, White House National Security Advisor Anthony Lake, the commander of U.S. troops in Europe, General George Joulwan —

along with British, French, German and Russian mediators in the "contact group" — have all been involved in the marathon talks here, he noted. The United States has in effect given the parties an ultimatum that they reach agreement before Monday 10 a.m. (1500 GMT), saying an "event" will be called at that time, either to initiate a peace agreement or explain the reasons for failure. Earlier Sunday, Croatian President Franjo Tudjman left Zagreb Sunday for the United States, where he said an agreement on ending the war in former Yugoslavia is expected to be initiated Monday. Asked by reporters at Zagreb airport if talks in Dayton, are reaching fruition, Mr. Tudjman said: "It looks like it. If it wasn't so they would not call me to come back." He said the talks "should be finished tomorrow. It is expected that an agreement will be initiated (then)." Mr. Tudjman said the deal expected to be reached in Dayton concerns not only Bosnia, but also Croatia. He said he did not want to make any comments on the details

of the expected agreements. Two deals have already been struck in Dayton, one on strengthening the Bosnia Muslim-Croat alliance and another between Zagreb and rebel Serbs on the peaceful reintegration into Croatia of east Slavonia, the last disputed Croatian area. "It is important that Croatia establishes its sovereignty over the area (of eastern Slavonia), if possible without casualties," Mr. Tudjman said. Several sources close to the talks said peace negotiators made progress on Saturday night and that a deal was imminent. "Things are coming to an end. They are being wrapped up as we speak," one Balkan source said. In Sarajevo, hundreds of Bosnian Croats and Muslims protested in Sunday, fearing that negotiators are about to surrender their homes to Serbs at peace talks in the United States. Leaked details of the peace negotiations in Dayton indicate the Bosnian Serbs are likely to be handed a 20-kilometre wide strip of land connecting their territories in eastern and western Bosnia. The Serbs already hold

part of what is known as the "Posavina corridor" but would be granted control of additional ground now occupied by Bosnian army troops and allied Croat forces. For Muslims and Croats driven from their homes in Posavina during Bosnia's 42-month war or now facing eviction, the deal amounts to a betrayal. "The territories are being exchanged but no one is asking those of us who were born there or expelled from there and certainly not those who died there," said Reuf Ibricagic, 60, a protester from Derвента in the corridor area. Most of those attending the indoor rally seemed to blame Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and Croatian President Tudjman for the deal even though it will only come into effect if Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic signs too. "Tudjman and Milosevic can give and trade their land if their people allow it but they can't do that with Bosnia Herzegovina," said one elderly man. Mr. Ibricagic insisted the Bosnian army would reject any peace deal which failed

to meet citizens' needs. "Even if our delegations signs the deal, which would mean accepting the destruction of our homes, refusing to recognise genocide and granting amnesty to war crimes, it won't be accepted by (our) soldiers," he said. Kresimir Zubak, president of the Muslim-Croat Federation which is to assume greater importance after a peace deal, offered to resign last week over his disgust with the proposed Posavina corridor deal being negotiated in Dayton. Sunday's protesters in Sarajevo said Mr. Zubak, a Bosnian Croat war veteran from Doboj in the corridor area, was expressing the natural outrage of all those from Posavina. Virtually all those who gathered in the Bosnian capital on Sunday said they favoured a unified, multi-ethnic Bosnia where all national groups could live together after returning to their homes. Mr. Tudjman, meanwhile, came under fire in Zagreb for reportedly agreeing the U.S.-brokered peace deal for Bos-

Arafat enters Jenin

JENIN, West Bank (Agencies) — PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat told thousands of cheering Palestinians on Sunday they had been "liberated" under a peace deal with Israel which no assassin's bullet could kill. Protected by hundreds of bodyguards Mr. Arafat addressed crowds then chaired a cabinet meeting of his Palestinian authority during a four-hour visit to Jenin, only his third trip to the West Bank since self-rule began in Gaza and Jericho. Security was heavy following the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin by a Jewish gunman opposed to PLO peace on Nov. 4. "The peace process goes on. Nobody will be an obstacle, especially those who use their guns for assassination," Mr. Arafat said. "My brothers, this is the peace movement in the land of prophesy and so we should put our hands together in order to build the Palestinian state," Mr. Arafat said from a platform overlooking the crowd. "In the name of God, in the name of the Palestinian people, I declare Jenin liberated, liberated, liberated," he said. Israeli soldiers pulled out of the centre of Jenin last week as part of an agreement extending limited autonomy from the Gaza Strip and West Bank enclave of Jericho. Five more cities and part of Hebron are to be evacuated soon to allow for Palestinian elections on Jan. 20, Mr. Arafat has previously visited only Jericho. Jenin residents chanted greetings and a local band played the Palestinian national anthem when Mr. Arafat's helicopter landed less than an hour after taking off from his Gaza headquarters. Officials said the helicopter and another carrying Mr. Arafat's comrades were rented from Egypt but flown by Palestinians. "It's a great day," said Ihsan Tamrawi, a 30-year-old engineer in Jenin. "Our dreams have come true and we saw Yasser Arafat in the liberated land of Palestine." Elsewhere in the West Bank, 10 Palestinian police officers arrived in Tulikarm to prepare for Israel's withdrawal there next month. Residents lined the streets waving flags and singing nationalist songs. Mr. Arafat told the crowd he had visited the Jenin area secretly after Israel captured the West Bank in the 1967 Middle East war. "Do you remember you used to honour me by bringing me food and drink from your homes? When I met you we used to meet in secrecy. Now, we meet face-to-face to build the future of Palestinian liberated land," Mr. Arafat said. "I appeal to you, I do not want any sister or brother to



PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat makes the V-sign to a crowd of Palestinians as he arrives in Jenin Sunday on his first visit to this northern West Bank town since the last Israeli soldiers leave last week (AFP photo)

refrain from voting in the coming elections," Mr. Arafat told the crowd, prompting mixed reactions. Merchant Jamal Ghanem, 30, said: "This has raised the morale of the people here. It means independence." But office worker Tala Farhan, 22, said Mr. Arafat's speech was only meant to boost his election campaign. The Palestinian Authority failed Sunday to adopt an electoral law after an internal division among its members. Palestinian officials said, "We had hoped to finalise it today but it was not possible due to many comments and suggested amendments." The local government "minister" Saeb Erakat. But he added the law should be adopted later in the week ahead of elections. Mr. Erakat added the registration of voters which began on Nov. 12 "is going ahead in a satisfactory way. The rate of participation in the areas where it has already taken place has surpassed 99 per cent. It is more than we had hoped for." Candidates would be registered between Dec. 10 and 21 and the campaign would start on Dec. 30, he added. Culture "Minister" Yasser Abed Rabbo said "in principle" the electoral law had been approved and would be handed over to a special legal committee. "By the start of next week, it will be declared as the final official law ... there have been some amendments but mainly the law is still based on the (rules of) majority and district." The 82-members elected to the self-rule council would also be part of the Palestinian National Council, the parliament in exile. Mr. Abed Rabbo said. "However, their main task

is to establish laws and legislations in the self-rule areas. "All political parties will be able to participate without any restriction. We will make that the law will be implemented as it is on the text." Most of the Palestinians opposition groups, including the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), have said they would boycott the poll (see relevant story on page 12). "If the redeployment keeps going at the same pace, we will be able to meet the timetable before the end of the year and hold elections. There is no obstacle." Mr. Erakat said that after the pullback from Jenin "it's Tulikarm, Qalqilya and then Nablus." Almost 400,000 Palestinians have registered in the first week of a canvass to be on the electoral roll for self-rule elections in January, the central election commission said Sunday. A total of 382,000 Palestinians have filled in registration forms for the elections in which some 1.2 million people aged 18 and above are eligible to vote Jan. 20. Seven thousand teachers are carrying out a door-to-door canvass in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and annexed East Jerusalem. It began Nov. 12 and is due to be completed Dec. 2. "The first week of voter registration was a successful start on the way to the first Palestinian general elections," said Mohammad Shattayeh, the deputy chairman of the commission. The draft electoral register will be published Dec. 10 to allow the public to file for corrections, and the final list will be presented Dec. 30, the first day of the electoral campaign.

Syria steps up call for peace

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Syria gave more indications Sunday that it was ready to resume peace talks with Israel as U.S. Middle East envoy Dennis Ross visited the Jewish state to try to jump start negotiations between the two countries. The official daily Al Thawrah urged Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres to "seize the new opportunity and make up for lost time before (Israeli) elections," which are set for November 1996. "Amid the encouraging signs, the United States has dispatched Mr. Ross on a new mission to break the deadlock in the negotiations," which have been hobbled for several months, the newspaper said. "Officially, Ross came to Israel to meet the new leaders," a Western diplomat here said. Mr. Ross is not scheduled to visit Syria but "that could change at any moment," the official said. Five days after the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Syrian

President Hafez Al Assad expressed hope for "rapid" progress in Israeli-Syrian peace negotiations. Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa has said that an acceleration of peace talks would be the only "positive response" to Mr. Rabin's assassination at a Tel Aviv peace rally in Nov. 4. The change in tone over the past two weeks in Syria's official media towards Israel has been significant. Mr. Peres has a better image in Damascus than Mr. Rabin. Mr. Ross hopes to seal agreement on a meeting between Mr. Peres and Mr. Sharaa at a Barcelona conference in late November, despite Syrian reluctance to meet at such a senior level, a government official told state radio. "I would be pleasantly surprised if such a meeting took place and it would reveal a change in the Syrian position," said Economy Minister Yossi Beilin, who is close to Mr. Peres.

Mr. Peres has already envisioned a withdrawal from the strategic Golan Heights and was opposed to Mr. Rabin's desire to put off Syrian peace talks until after Israeli elections. "Mr. Peres, who has been chosen to form a new government, has expressed his desire to restart negotiations and declared that peace is more important than elections," the government newspaper Tishrin said Saturday. It said Mr. Rabin "fell under the pressure of the right and radical (Jewish) settlers and asked the U.S. administration to delay its mediation until next spring." Israeli-Syrian negotiations ground to a halt five months ago amid disagreements over security arrangements on the Golan Heights to accompany any Israeli withdrawal. Israel, which seized the strategic plateau from Syria in the 1967 war, is moving to reopen peace talks after sensing new overtures from Damascus since Mr. Rabin's assassination.

Jordan committed to democracy, liberty — Kabariti

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times
AMMAN — Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti Saturday stressed Jordan's commitment to democracy and pluralism but warned against abuse of liberties, politicising of religion and misuse of press freedoms. "Freedom of the press should be enhanced and consolidated in line with the national and international principles that are based on the oneness of objective and belonging," Mr. Kabariti said at the opening of a seminar on democracy and the rule of law organised by Al Urdun Al Jadid Research Centre in cooperation with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. "All attempts aimed

at politicising religion should be put to an end but a stress should be made on its role in forming the nation's conscience. "The status of the professional associations should be rectified to make it apolitical... Associations should dedicate their work to improving the profession itself. They should work on preserving the interests of their members and promoting the objectives upon which they were established," the foreign minister said. Mr. Kabariti, who concentrated mainly on "responsible journalism" and "calm dialogue" as the right instruments for a "respected" press, was replying to comments made by Hani Horani, director of Al Urdun Al Jadid Centre,

in which Mr. Horani alluded to what he described as Jordanians' concern over the process of democracy. "This concern is legitimate," Mr. Horani said in his speech. "And we feel no embarrassment to express it in clear and frank terms, because the alternative for our country is to remain under the mercy of the unknown and the missing links in the dialogue." "Perhaps the speech made by His Majesty King Hussein and the hot discussion that followed are a very clear example of the concern and even the anger, at the various official and popular levels, due to weak dialogue and the failure to reach decisive results upon which we can build and resume our

march," Mr. Horani added. The recent speech by King Hussein two weeks ago before senior army and security officers at Al Hussein Medical City kicked off a debate within the different milieux especially over freedom of the press and the status of professional unions. The intention expressed by the government to amend the Press and Publications Law topped the headlines in several newspapers over the past two weeks, and debate raged over the constitutionality of obligatory membership in professional associations and the unions' role in political life. "Even the differences over the Middle East peace process and the conclusion

of the peace treaty with Israel should not be a reason for going back on democracy," Mr. Horani said. "Violence, terrorism and extremism, usually prosper under a climate of repression, although it may appear on the surface that democracy gives the opportunity for extremist voices to be heard better." In response, Mr. Kabariti said: "Without getting into details over fears raised by Mr. Horani in relation to democracy, I would like to point out that in the (King's) letter of designation to Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker to form his government in April 1989, (the Sharif) was designated to work on creating an environment

(Continued on page 7)

Algeria's Zeroual urged to start dialogue with FIS

ALGIERS (R) — An Islamist leader on Sunday urged Algeria's President Liamine Zeroual to capitalise on his decisive election victory and launch a dialogue with the Muslim opposition to end civil strife that has killed 50,000 people.

Islamist leader Sheikh Abdullah Jaballah said "chaos and disturbances" would continue unless the government sought a political solution to the four-year-old crisis through direct talks with the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS).

Mr. Jaballah, head of the opposition Nahda Party, said the election could provide a chance for peace only if serious dialogue was started with FIS.

"If the authority does not respond, the political impasse would continue between it and the opposition and the chaos and disturbances would go on," he told Reuters.

Nahda is a legal Islamist party member of an alliance of eight opposition groups, including FIS, known as the "National Pact."

Mr. Jaballah, who is close to the FIS leadership, has in the past acted as an intermediary between the authorities and two jailed FIS leaders in failed attempts to resolve the crisis.

He expected Mr. Zeroual's government to start talks with the opposition in the coming few months on its preparations to hold parliamentary elections he said would be held in 1996.

Asked whether the national pact groups — which boycotted Thursday's election — would also not participate in the general polls, Mr. Jaballah suggested the opposition could take part to "reorganise the political map of the Algerian society."

The country slid into violence in January 1992 when the authorities cancelled general elections FIS was poised to win.

Western diplomats in Algiers said Mr. Zeroual's outright victory in Thursday's presidential elections, with heavy voter turnout, would weaken hardliners on both sides of the conflict — the military and Muslim militants.

They said this gave Mr. Zeroual a rare chance to seek a political solution and expected a "gesture" towards FIS soon.

Mr. Zeroual has at least twice opened indirect talks with jailed FIS leader Abassi Madani in the past 18 months. The diplomats blamed hardline generals and militants, who want to settle the conflict through guns, for fanning the bids.

"People did not vote for Zeroual as a person, they voted for peace and reconciliation," one diplomat told Reuters. "It was a realistic choice as Zeroual knows the crisis and as a former defence

minister has the capabilities of ending it."

"The vote and massive turnout means that revolutionary Islam in Algeria is finished politically," one diplomat said.

"It also means that the army was sent a message that people are tired of its unsuccessful war against the militants and want a political solution."

He said the military establishment knew that from now on, Western governments would closely watch the democratic process and urge resolution of the conflict at the negotiating table, not on the battlefield.

Western governments welcomed the peaceful election and heavy turnout and most Arab leaders congratulated Mr. Zeroual.

Washington wished Algerians a period of calm to resolve their problems while Paris, Algeria's past colonial ruler and present main creditor, asked Mr. Zeroual to start dialogue with the opposition.

Mr. Zeroual, appointed head of state in January 1994 by a military-dominated council, won 61 per cent of the vote.

Official figures showed nearly 75 per cent of Algeria's 16 million voters cast ballots despite threats by militants of widespread bloodshed on election day. Voting proceeded peacefully,



PREMIER MEETS UNHCR ENVOY: Prime Minister Rafik Hariri on Sunday met with UNHCR Envoy, Ms. Ashkari, to discuss the services provided by the UNHCR for refugees in the world. Ms. Ashkari took over as chief of the UNHCR mission here last month (Petra High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) photo)

'Uganda troops are in southern Sudan'

NAIROBI (R) — Ugandan troops are still occupying parts of the Sudan's eastern Equatoria province, the Sudanese embassy in Nairobi said in a statement Sunday.

Uganda has repeatedly denied Sudanese claims that its troops are supporting southern Sudanese rebels who have been fighting a guerrilla war for the past 12 years. It says, however, that Ugandan rebels of the Christian fundamentalist Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) have bases in Sudan.

After Sudan said last week that its forces were moving towards the border, Uganda warned it would resist any threat to its territory.

Saying the presence of Ugandan troops is an "apparent occupation" of Sudanese territory, the embassy statement added: "The government counter-offensive has already begun by striking the foreign military presence in Kit and Magawa."

Commenting on claims by the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) to be closing on Juba, the southern regional capital, the embassy said: "It would be a fatal mistake for the SPLA and Ugandan troops to try to capture Juba."

Polisario hands over 185 Moroccan prisoners of war to Red Cross

ALGIERS (AFP) — The rebel movement fighting Morocco in the Western Sahara said Sunday it had handed 185 Moroccan prisoners to the International Committee of the Red Cross which repatriated them.

The Polisario Front added in a statement that the prisoners, mainly old soldiers freed on humanitarian grounds, were repatriated on board U.S. and Argentinian planes, following a request by the Italian government.

Initially, the prisoners were released in 1989, but Morocco then refused to repatriate them.

According to the Polisario Front, Rabat authorities considered the men were neither prisoners of war, nor Moroccan.

A first group of Moroccan prisoners, who were ill or wounded, were released in May 1984, the Polisario Front added.

International journalists visited the Moroccan prisoners living in a former "barracks" (small fortress) in the Tindouf region in September 1991, on the sidelines of ceasefire festivities in Western Sahara.

Living in total liberty, the prisoners then said they were Moroccan and had been captured by Polisario troops.

The Polisario has always refused to state the exact number of Moroccan prisoners it is holding.

"We have other prisoners," was all an official from the Polisario "embassy" in Algiers told AFP.

Sunday's repatriation comes amid continuing difficulties over a referendum, which should be held early next year, on self-determination in the Western Sahara.

Since January 1992, the process of identifying voters has faltered over differences of opinion between Morocco and the Polisario.

In the 1970s, the Algeria-based Polisario Front launched an armed struggle to regain the Western Sahara from the former colonial power, Spain, and then from Morocco, which declared the region a fourth province after Spain withdrew.

The United Nations Security Council is trying to hold a referendum on self-determination in the region and has called on Morocco and the Polisario Front to "fully cooperate" in an attempt to accelerate the process.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Ekeus due in Iraq in weeks

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Rolf Ekeus, the head of the U.N. commission on disarmament Iraq, is due to visit Baghdad in about two weeks, a U.N. official said here Sunday. The visit by the chairman of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) is to pursue talks on eliminating Iraq's programmes to acquire weapons of mass destruction, the official told AFP. At around the same time two or three U.N. teams of experts will travel to Iraq to verify documents given by Baghdad and inspect sites which had been used for making or storing chemical, biological or ballistic weapons, he said. Mr. Ekeus gave the U.N. Security Council in September a report accusing Baghdad of having hidden important information about its nuclear and germ warfare programmes. The Security Council later decided to continue the sanctions first imposed after Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

Hariri off to Buenos Aires

BEIRUT (AP) — Prime Minister Rafik Hariri has flown to Argentina on a three-day official visit during which he will seek to expand economic and trade relations. Mr. Hariri, accompanied by the ministers of oil, industry, health, immigration and information, left Beirut Saturday for Paris. He was scheduled to leave for Buenos Aires Sunday. The prime minister will discuss with Argentine President Carlos Menem and other officials agreements to avoid double taxation and investment guarantees, the state-run national news agency said. Mr. Hariri will also invest in Lebanon, where his government has launched a multi-billion-dollar plan to rebuild the country from the devastation of the 1975-90 civil war. There are more than 1.5 million Lebanese expatriates in Argentina, with some of them holding key posts in public and private institutions. Mr. Hariri's visit will be the first to Argentina by a high-ranking Lebanese official in 41 years. The late President Camille Chamoun visited Argentina in 1954.

Hashish smugglers arrested in S. Arabia

RIYADH (AP) — Authorities have arrested five men trying to smuggle 377 kilograms of hashish into Saudi Arabia, a newspaper reported Sunday. The daily Al Riyadh estimated the street value of the haul at \$3 million. The newspaper quoted General Sultan Ayed El Harthy, head of the interior ministry's anti-drug department, as saying that one of the five, a Saudi national, was seized with 321 kilograms of hashish. Four others, whose nationalities were not disclosed, were caught with the rest. The penalty for drug smuggling in Saudi Arabia is death by the sword.

Hijacker sentenced to death in Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — A man accused of hijacking an Iranian passenger plane to Egypt 11 years ago has been sentenced to death, the head of Tehran's revolutionary court said Sunday. Gholamreza Rahbarpur, quoted by the official Iranian news agency IRNA, said Gholamreza Vahidju had been found guilty of being "the enemy of God" for hijacking the plane and creating panic and terror in the hearts of the passengers. Mr. Vahidju, who was arrested on Sept. 20 as he tried to cross the border into Turkey, was also given 10 years in prison for "forging passports and other official documents," he said. His trial started last Sunday at a revolutionary court in Tehran. Mr. Rahbarpur said the convict had appealed the sentence and the case would be sent up to the supreme court, which often approves decisions taken by lower courts. Mr. Vahidju was convicted of seizing the Boeing 727 plane while on a domestic flight in 1984 with the help of a former military official, Hamid Ahari, who is now living in exile abroad. Mr. Vahidju told the court last week that they first ordered the plane to Iraq which was at the time in the middle of its 1980-1988 war against Iran. But the pilot refused to go to Iraq and the plane temporarily landed in Qatar after being driven away from Saudi Arabian and Bahraini airspace.

Journalists invited back to Algeria as tourists

ALGIERS (AFP) — Foreign reporters who covered the recent presidential election in Algeria have been invited back by the government to tour the country's Sahara region as tourists this winter. Tourism Minister Mohammed Bensalem sent each journalist a letter to express the government's appreciation at their having covered the poll won by Liamine Zeroual and invited them to take part in an organised trip "in the Hoggar and Tassili regions, at the heart of one of the most beautiful deserts in the world." Some 300 foreign reporters traveled to Algeria to cover the elections last Thursday. They were housed in one of the capital's four-star hotels amid tight security.

Kuwaiti acquitted of collaborating with Iraq

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — A court here on Sunday acquitted a Kuwaiti who had been accused of supplying Iraqi forces with intelligence about the Kuwaiti army during the occupation five years ago. Hussam Hassan Abbas Khorshid was acquitted after the criminal court said there was too little evidence to convict him and several witnesses testified he had behaved well during the Iraqi occupation from August 1990 to February 1991. Mr. Khorshid had been accused of supplying Iraqi troops with intelligence about the Kuwaiti army and its facilities, as well as acting "in a way to weaken the morale of Kuwaitis," court sources said. It was first time the criminal court delivered a verdict on a state security matter since the special state security court was abolished in August. More than 260 people were tried by the security court before it was abolished, most of them Iraqis, Jordanians and Palestinians accused of having collaborated with Baghdad.

Iran, UAE try to map out plan to resolve dispute over islands

DOHA (AFP) — Delegates from Iran and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) tried here Sunday to map out a course for resolving a dispute over three strategic islands in the Gulf, sources close to the negotiations said.

In the first talks in three years, the two sides tried to agree on an agenda for future negotiations over the islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb, the sources said.

The UAE on Saturday proposed a four-point agenda demanding first Iran's withdrawal from the two Tunbs, a UAE official said.

The head of the UAE delegation, Khalifa Al-Merri, also asked for implementing the accord the two countries struck in 1971 calling for shared administration of Abu Musa until its sovereignty is determined.

The UAE delegation also proposed taking the conflict to the International Court of Justice at the Hague if the two sides fail to reach an agreement after a specified time period.

Attending the opening of the talks on Saturday were Qatar's Foreign Minister Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabr Al Thani, whose country has been mediating for the past four months.

Heading the Iranian team was Hussein Sadeqi, a senior foreign ministry official.

The talks on the islands of Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunb were the

first since September 1992 when a session in Abu Dhabi broke up without agreement.

The Abu Dhabi round collapsed after Iran refused to discuss the Greater and Lesser Tunb, claimed by the Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah.

The dispute erupted in 1992 after the UAE accused Iran of trying to annex Abu Musa despite a 21-year-old arrangement to share administration with the Emirate of Sharjah.

In 1994, the UAE suggested taking the dispute to the International Court of Justice, which Iran rejected. The UAE's position is backed by its fellow Gulf Cooperation Council members — Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait.

After Sudan said last week that its forces were moving towards the border, Uganda warned it would resist any threat to its territory.

Saying the presence of Ugandan troops is an "apparent occupation" of Sudanese territory, the embassy statement added: "The government counter-offensive has already begun by striking the foreign military presence in Kit and Magawa."

Commenting on claims by the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) to be closing on Juba, the southern regional capital, the embassy said: "It would be a fatal mistake for the SPLA and Ugandan troops to try to capture Juba."

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Embassy attack carries a message ahead of Egyptian elections

CAIRO, Egypt (AP) — The car-bombing at the Egyptian embassy in Pakistan on Sunday carries the message in advance of parliament elections here that the Islamic radical movement is still a force to be reckoned with.

The car-bombing — which claimed at least 13 lives and wounded nearly 60 others — comes 10 days before Egyptians go to the polls to elect a new lower house, the people's assembly.

The blast in Islamabad was claimed by Al-Gamaa Al-Islamiya, or the Islamic group, which has been blamed for much of the violence in a 3½-year campaign to try to overthrow Egypt's secular government and replace it with strict Islamic rule.

The claim came in an anonymous telephone call to a Western news agency in Cairo. There was no way to independently verify its authenticity.

Radical groups have urged Egyptians to boycott the upcoming elections, arguing that they violate Islamic principles.

"There was no immediate comment from government officials in Cairo. The foreign ministry, meanwhile, set up an "operations room" of senior officials to monitor the aftermath of the bombing.

Hala Mustafa, an analyst with the Al-Ahram Centre for Political and Strategic Studies, told the Associated Press that "the election is one reason. Also, the extremists are angry that Egypt in the past year has tried to get at the leadership of Al-Gamaa abroad."

Egypt has worked out an extradition treaty with Pakistan and has sought to repatriate scores of Egyptian radicals who remain on the subcontinent, some since fighting as "Mujahideen" during the Afghan insurgency against the Russians in the 1980s.

She also said that radical Muslim groups could be moving to make good on their pledge to avenge the conviction of Egyptian Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman.

The cleric, who is spiritual leader of the Islamic group, was convicted along with nine others by a New York court last October of conspiring to wage a "holy war" on the United States by blowing up New York landmarks.

"If it was reaction to the Abdul-Rahman case, there could be a connection between what happened in Pakistan and the U.S. building in Saudi Arabia," Ms. Mustafa said.

Last Monday, five American

and an Indian were killed when a car-bomb exploded outside a building in the Saudi city of Riyadh that served as the headquarters for a U.S. military programme.

The Saudi blast was claimed by two groups — the previously unknown Tigers of the Gulf and the Islamic Change movement, which earlier this year threatened to attack Americans if they did not withdraw forces from Saudi Arabia.

Concerted police action in Egypt has largely confined the Islamic group's activities to the south, mainly in the area of Malawi some 260 kilometres south of Cairo.

Thousands of suspected Muslim militants have been jailed. Fifty have been executed, most after trials in military courts. More than 850 people have died in the

Islamic radicals' campaign, mostly militants and police.

The capital is quiet, and foreign tourists have begun returning in such numbers that the government is predicting a record of more than 3 million visitors this year.

Frustrated at home, the extremists appear to be looking for targets abroad in advance of the Nov. 29 elections, in which the public will elect 444 new deputies.

Last Monday, Alaa El-Din Nazmi, an Egyptian commercial counselor, was shot to death in his apartment building in Geneva, Switzerland. Although his briefcase, wallet and air ticket were missing, diplomatic sources here believe he was assassinated by Muslim radicals.

The previously unknown International Justice Group claimed responsibility in a

fax to Western news agency in Cairo.

On June 26, gunmen opened fire on the motorcade of President Hosni Mubarak as he arrived for an African summit in Ethiopia capital Addis Ababa. Mr. Mubarak was unharmed, but the Palestinian ambassador to Ethiopia was wounded in the crossfire.

The Islamic group claimed responsibility of complicity in the attack.

There is little question in Egypt that the Islamic group could hit the embassy in Pakistan.

They include several whom Egypt identifies as leaders of Islamic extremists here.

One is Mustafa Shawki Al-Islamboti, believed to be head of the Islamic group's military wing. His brother Khaleel was executed for the 1981 assassination of Egyptian President Sadat.

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 77311-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
14:00	Shelly Duval's Bedtime Stories
14:30	Playabout
14:45	Playabout
15:05	Playabout
15:45	Doc — Nature World of Mitsuabi
16:00	Love Lucy
17:00	Children's programme — Fractale
17:30	Scie — Maria Vandamme
19:00	News in French
19:15	Magazine — Nimbus
19:30	News Headlines
19:35	Interventions
20:00	The Bold and the Beautiful
21:10	Star Trek
22:00	News in English
22:25	Inspector Morse
23:59	The American Chan Show

PRAYER TIMES	
04:43	Fajr
06:03	(Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:21	Dhuhr
14:14	'Asr
16:38	Maghreb
17:59	Isha

CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church	Swetlah, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel.	632785
St. Joseph Church, Tel.	624590

WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
Moderate to partly cloudy weather conditions will prevail with a chance of showers in the northern parts of the Kingdom and winds southwesterly moderate. In Agaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.	
Min./Max. temp.	
Amman	5/20
Agaba	13/25
Deserts	3/22
Jordan Valley	12/26

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR	
Yesterday's high temperatures:	Amman 21, Agaba 25 Humidity readings: Amman 27 per cent, Agaba 46 per cent.
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Hisham Kan'an	790286
Dr. Nasser Ibrahim	649328
Dr. Hanna Mansour	750197
Dr. Issam Al Asmar	890504
Rina pharmacy	661912
Ferdous pharmacy	778336
Al Asma pharmacy	637055
Nairoth pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shmeisani pharmacy	637660
Nairoth pharmacy	623672
Najib pharmacy	647652
IRBID:	
Dr. Ali Al Oumri	272032
Aqaba pharmacy	(—)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Abdul Karim Khashashneh	636381
Dr. Abdul Karim Khashashneh	636381
Khalif pharmacy	985417
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	
Rescue	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Rescue Police 192	621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	617101
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	943402
Traffic Police	943402
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	635820
Priest Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	
Complaints	877467
Amman Municipality	
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information	
(Directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	
Repairs	623101
Abdullah Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	774111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	680100
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power	
Company	636381
RJ Flight Information	08-33300
Queen Alia Intl. Airport	08-53300
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn	642481/6
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn	642481/6
Jabal Amman Maternity	624412
Mahes, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shmeisani	670711
Shmeisani Hospital	669131
University Hospital	845845
Al-Muasher Hospital	667227/9
The Islamic, Abdull	666127/7
Al-Abul, Abdull	664164/6
Julian, Al-Muasher	777011/2
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh	775111/26
Army, Marka	891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital	612240/50
Amal Hospital	674155
The Arab Center for Heart and Special Surgery	865199
ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	(09)783323
Zarqa National Hospital	(09)783323
Ibn Sina Hospital	(09)783323
Al-Hikma Modern Hospital	(09)783323
Irqad	
Princess Basma Hospital	(02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital	(02)272727
Ibn Al-Nafes Hospital	(02)274700
AQABA:	
Princess Haya Hospital	(03)341411
FOR THE TRAVELLER	
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53300-5, where it should always be verified.	
ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
07:20	Sanaa (RJ)
08:35	Jeddah (RJ)
09:00	Agaba (RJ)
09:00	Damascus (RJ)
09:30	New Delhi (RJ)
09:55	Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:05	Cairo (RJ)
16:30	Beirut (RJ)
16:45	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:40	Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)
19:00	Bangkok (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
04:00	Rome (AZ)

06:00	Khairoun (SD)	
06:30	Cairo (MS)	
12:40	Muscat, Abu Dhabi (GF)	
15:00	Vienna (OS)	
15:30	Kiev (RU)	
19:00	Paris, Damascus (AF)	
22:45	Athens, Beirut (OA)	
23:05	London (BA)	
01:30	Amsterdam (KL)	
DEPARTURES		
Royal Jordanian (RJ)		
Flights		
(Terminal 1)		
06:15	Beirut (RJ)	
06:30	Agaba (RJ)	
11:00	Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)	
12:45	London (RJ)	
12:55	Cairo (RJ)	
12:25	Frankfurt (RJ)	
20:15	Bahrain, Doha (RJ)	
20:45	Damascus (RJ)	
21:15	Dubai, Muscat (RJ)	
21:30	Abu Dhabi (RJ)	
22:45	Sanaa (RJ)	
Other Flights (Terminal 2)		
05:00	Rome (AZ)	
06:00	Istanbul (TK)	
06:50	Beirut, London (BA)	
07:45	Beirut (MS)	
13:30	Cairo (MS)	
15:50	Muscat, Vienna (GF)	
16:30	Vienna (OS)	
08:40	Kiev (RU)	
02:30	London (BA)	
02:30	Amsterdam (KL)	
03:00	Beirut, Athens (OA)	

HIJAZ RAILWAY	
TRAIN	
Dep. Amman	8:00 every Monday
Arr. Damascus	
Dep. Amman	5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus	7:30 p.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman	5:00 p.m. every Sunday
MARKET PRICES	
<i>Upper/lower price in fils per kg.</i>	
Apple	700/500
Banana	680
Banana (Mukammal)	620
Cabbage	140/100
Carrot	250/187
Cauliflower	140/100
Cucumbers (small)	200/120
Cucumbers (large)	380/300
Eggplant	150/100
Garlic	750/500
Grape	620/500
Grape Fruit	200/150
Lemon	250/180
Marrow (large)	100/50
Marrow (small)	180/100
Olives (green)	250/200
Onion (green)	260/200
Onion (dry)	250/200
Orange	160/100
Pepper (hot)	470/370
Pepper (sweet)	550/100
Potato	250/200
Radish	130/80
Spinach	180/100
String Beans	700/500



HRH Princess Basma Sunday meets with Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker to discuss the formation of a national committee for the welfare of women (Petra photo)

Princess Basma forms women's national welfare committee

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Sunday secured the government's approval for the creation of a national committee for the welfare of Jordanian women.

A statement following a visit by the Princess to Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker said that discussions covered a number of topics related to women's affairs and activating the national strategy on women.

Princess Basma, who is

president of the National Jordanian Committee on Women's Affairs, discussed Jordanian contribution to the Beijing World Conference on Women last September.

The statement said the prime minister approved of the Princess's recommendation on forming the national committee for the welfare of women which is to be chaired by Princess Basma.

The new committee will group the ministers of plan-

ning, justice, social development and representatives of the ministries of labour and municipal and rural affairs and the environment and the interior. It also includes the Noor Al Hussein Foundation, the General Federation of Jordanian Women, the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development as well as several women representing the private sector in the various governorates.

Premier: EDF loans should be evenly allocated to spur income generation

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Sunday said a fair distribution of soft loans by the Employment and Development Fund (EDF) to needy groups should be guaranteed in order to help create job opportunities, especially in the less fortunate areas of the country.

Speaking at a meeting with the EDF board members, the prime minister said loans should go towards income-generating projects to support the needs of the unemployed and the poor.

He said that the EDF should organise a campaign to inform the public of its services and its objectives and to encourage the public to initiate schemes that may benefit from EDF loans.

Sharif Zeid recommended that the EDF step up cooperation with voluntary groups and non-governmental associations which are geared towards helping job seekers, as well as others, such as the Agricultural Credit Corporation, the Queen Alia Fund for Social

Development and the Noor Al Hussein Foundation.

The prime minister said the EDF should also adopt practical ways of locating and reaching needy groups in remote areas of the community.

The prime minister discussed various fund programmes with EDF board members. Sharif Zeid also heard a report from the EDF's director general on activities in 1995.

He reviewed programmes financed by the European Union as well as agreements between the EDF and national Jordanian corporations and institutions.

EDF Director General Ali Quba'a outlined the fund's achievements and the volume of loans offered to individuals and local societies that specialise in helping the poor.

Mr. Quba'a said the fund provided JD 6 million in loans to beneficiaries and helped to create 2,500 jobs during 1995.

The EDF was created in 1991, and since that time it has provided a total of near-



Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Sunday meets with members of the Employment and Development Fund board (Petra photo)

ly JD 14 million that have helped to create 6,700 jobs, according to the EDF director.

The EDF board, which is

chaired by Sharif Zeid, groups the ministers of finance, planning, agriculture, labour, social development and municipal and

rural affairs and the environment, in addition to the EDF general director and four private sector members.

Council approves trade draft law

AMMAN (Petra) — The Council of Ministers Sunday announced its approval of a draft law on organising trades and blue-collar labour in Jordan and said the draft law aims at achieving a balance between the quality of products and services, and Jordanian regulations and specifications.

The announcement also said that the law protects the interests and rights of citizens, deals with disputes arising from failure on the part of manufacturers and workers to offer commodities or services in accordance with the required specifications and helps curtail malpractice on the part of tradesmen.

According to the announcement the draft law has provisions that tackle economic and legal issues pertaining to trade and will help develop workers' efficiency and the improvement of their skills.

The law provides for the creation of a special court

to deal with trades-related disputes, according to the announcement.

The Ministry of Labour and the Vocational Training Corporation will be entrusted with implementing the law once it is published in the official gazette, the announcement said.

The Council of Ministers has also decided to grant a lease to four investment companies to set up four or five-star hotels at four different locations on the eastern coast of the Dead Sea.

Each company will pay JD 2,500 annually for 30 years (the duration of the lease) for a dunum of land in these areas, and will have to make the payment in advance and at five year intervals, according to the announcement.

The statement from the Cabinet said that part of the Dead Sea coast will be developed to serve as a free tourist site to benefit limited income groups.

The Cabinet also formed a delegation led by the

Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment to take part in the seventh meeting of nations that signed the Montreal Protocol for the protection of the ozone layer. The meeting will be held in Montreal between Nov. 20 and Dec. 7.

The Cabinet formed Jordan's delegation to a meeting on civil aviation to be held in Cairo on Nov. 17 and 18.

The delegation will be headed by the director general of the Civil Aviation Authority, Ahmad Jweiber. Jordan is also to take part in a meeting by ministers of higher education and health to be held in Cairo on Dec. 4.

A delegation has been formed to take part in the Organisation of Islamic Conference to be held in Guinea on Dec. 9.

The Cabinet has formed a delegation to conduct air transport negotiations with Greece.

Court to announce decision over transfer of case

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The State Security Court today is expected to announce its decision whether to try six people accused of sabotage or to transfer the case to civil courts after a heated argument Sunday between the defendants' attorney and the prosecutor general over the court's jurisdiction.

During a one-hour court session, Prosecutor General Major Mahmoud Obaidat contested the defence's argument and insisted that the court had jurisdiction over the case.

According to the prosecu-

tor general's charge sheet, the group, known as the "Islamic Revivalists", is charged with illegal possession and manufacturing of explosive materials, automatic weapons and guns for illicit use, and belonging to an illegal organisation.

The defendants' attorney, Kamal Nasser, last month contested the court's jurisdiction claiming that the conditions to try the defendants at a State Court were not met.

Dr. Nasser said the two conditions include illegal possession of explosive materials and belonging to an illegal organisation.

"These two conditions should be in parallel for the

court to hear the case, and it is not proved that my clients belong to an illegal organisation so only one condition is available thus, the case should be dismissed from this court," Dr. Nasser told the court Sunday.

Major Obaidat, however, insisted that trying cases related to possession of illegal or illicit use of explosive materials was the state court's jurisdiction.

Presiding Judge Hafez Amin decided to postpone the case until today to decide on the fate of the case.

According to the prosecution, the group, which started gathering its members in

1990, was planning to carry out extremist attacks against foreigners in Jordan using explosives and automatic weapons. The six men were apprehended before executing any attack.

Meanwhile, a new date, Nov. 29, was set for the case of a Muslim militant charged with slandering against His Majesty King Hussein, according to the defendant's attorney, Mohammad Salameh.

Atta Abu Rishbeh, 53, spokesman for the illegal Hezb Al Tahrir (Liberation Party), was detained on Oct. 15 by authorities in his office in Ruseifeh, nine days after he was inter-

viewed by an Arabic weekly, Al Hiwar, in which he allegedly slandered the King.

According to Mr. Salameh, the state court is expected to announce within the next week a date to start bearing another case of a university professor in Jerash also charged with slandering against King Hussein.

Adnan Hussein Smadi, 53, was apprehended by the authorities on Oct. 7, one day following his delivery of a religious lecture before Friday prayers.

Railway transport network is key to development in Arab World — minister

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan believes that development and progress in the Arab region can only be achieved through linking Arab states through a modern network of overland transport, especially through economically viable railways. Minister of Transport Samir Kassar said Sunday.

Addressing the opening session of a five-day seminar on railways organised by the Arab Railways Federation (ARF) in cooperation with the Aqaba Railways Corporation (ARC), the minister said Jordan has prepared a set of feasibility studies on railways in order to promote domestic transport and link Jordan with

other countries in the region.

"We have submitted the schemes to the Amman economic summit and we hope to receive favourable response from Arab and foreign investors interested in implementing them," the minister said.

"I would like to emphasise Jordan's determination to carry out railway projects once the means have become available and investors cooperation for the projects has been secured," Mr. Kassar added.

The minister reaffirmed the importance of railway transport for the Arab region, and said Arab countries should implement railway projects jointly and



Samir Kassar

combine efforts to overcome obstacles that impede the development of existing

networks. The minister added that the council of Arab ministers of transport has already approved of a feasibility study for linking the Arab World through railways.

ARF Secretary General Murhaf Sabouni told the meeting that surveys conducted worldwide showed that 54 per cent of the pollutants to the atmosphere originate from land transport vehicles while railways caused minimal or no pollution to the environment.

Mr. Sabouni said railway transportation is of vital importance for development and Arab states can benefit from advanced

nations' experiments in that area.

The ARF is presently encouraging Arab countries to build railway networks which contribute to pan-Arab economic integration, Mr. Sabouni said.

Delegates from 16 Arab and foreign countries are discussing working papers which deal with the construction and maintenance of railway networks, the latest in railway developments, obstacles facing railway operations in developing nations and railway links inside and outside cities.

Workshop recommends information network to assess status of vulnerable groups

By Lola Keilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The recommendations of the two-day workshop entitled "Social Change and Vulnerable Groups in the Middle East," stressed on the need to establish a regional data information network in order to analyse, assess and identify current status of vulnerable groups in the region.

Experts in the field of human rights and human development from governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) who participated in the workshop said as a result of the new economic environment, privatisation and structural adjustment programmes, government spending on health, education, and social services will be limited in the region.

Therefore the experts said, these governments will be unable to cater to vulnerable groups, i.e., the poor, women and children whose numbers, they added are likely to increase.

In order to address this

problem the NGOs' "complementary" role in forming "safety nets" should be encouraged by increasing the number of young volunteers, reviewing old laws that date back three decades, establishing a mechanism in which United Nations agencies could be involved in NGO activities, encouraging the private sector to provide funds so NGOs could gain further independence from government bureaucracies and hegemonies.

One of the major concerns of the participants was the decrease in the number of young volunteers at their agencies, who because of the economic climate may need to work two jobs.

This problem could be overcome by reviewing school curricula and involving children in voluntary work and social development programmes, they said.

"We need to create a mechanism in which the desire to do voluntary work could become part of a child's character," said In'am

Development to H.M. Queen Noor.

She also stressed the important role NGOs can play and should play as pressure groups. NGOs can encourage governments to give vulnerable groups attention equal to their concern for economic conditions.

"These groups will not benefit from the new economic climate of peace," Ms. Mufii said.

She added NGOs should enable women and children to become self-reliant and confident.

Dr. Abdullah Khatib, president of the Executive Council of the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) said the situation of vulnerable groups in Jordan is frustrating.

"This group also includes the unemployed, the poor and the handicapped, of whom many fall in the category of the poor. "NGOs do not have a magic formula to solve all the problems; governments and the private sector should work together because it is a joint responsibility," Dr. Khatib said.

Exhibit portrays chessboard cycle of women's lives

By a Jordan Times
Staff Reporter

AMMAN — On exhibit at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts is a collection of art and photography celebrating Pakistani women and produced by some of Pakistan's most prominent contemporary women artists.

The exhibit, "Pakistani women of substance," opened last week and inaugurated by HRH Princess Sarvath Al Hassan, displays nearly 100 works from some of Pakistan's best-known women artists; Safima Hashmi, Meher Afro, Mussarat Mira, Zubeda Javed, Mansoor Hasan and Lala Rukh.

Featuring most prominently among the works are those of Nahid Raza, perhaps the most prominent female artist in Pakistan.

Ms. Raza, who travelled with the exhibition to Amman, has been exploring the theme of "women" since the mid-80s, a turning point in her career and personal life. "These paintings started as an expression of my own miseries," she says. Her misery stems from life as a divorcee, left with two children, in a society largely unaccepting of women of failed marriages.

Six long years after her marriage ended in 1979, Ms. Raza travelled to the United States for an artists' workshop; an experience, she says, that changed her thinking about herself and her art.

"I came from the States with a new perception of life," she explains. "I was there for six months and I was so lonely. But I saw so many women from different fields of life in the same

state (divorced, alone and with children), but they were working very hard — I had a feeling of being a woman without her children, so I started drawing my own self-expression. I had to paint my own miseries — how I felt about being a divorcee."

She paints women, mostly nude, an art form rejected during Islamic rule in Pakistan, she says. At the same time, she came under fire for being "some kind of feminist."

"So what?" she says. "These are feelings and statements I have to make."

And eventually her work came to withstand the criticism. She says now she is beyond her expressions of misery, at least her own misery. Her work now focuses on the importance of women and the cycle of life.

"Life begins with women," she muses. "The world literally rotates around women, but we treat them badly — I try to show this."

Her paintings, acrylic on paper, usually in three or four layers, vary from watercolour transparency to the rich texture of a broad brush.

Colour schemes also vary, apparently according to phases of her life.

Earlier works are sombre and dark with few warm colours save for those dedicated to "woman", who generally appears in earth tones.

She experimented for two years with black and white, but has returned to black with a greater prominence given to warm colours.

One might notice that in several works, a recurring theme of the cycle of life is

depicted in familiar symbols or in what Ms. Raza calls "the great chessboard of life."

"Chess is a game you have to play intelligently," she says, "and so is life. This is why I have chosen a chessboard to represent the game of life. If you look at each square, there are people doing things, completing things — it's the same in life. Each square you land on, there are certain things you have to do, responsibilities you have to complete."

The art and photo exhibit are on display at the National Gallery of Fine Arts in Jebel Luweibdeh until Nov. 25, and is sponsored by the Embassy of Pakistan in cooperation with the Jordanian Royal Society of Fine Arts and the Pakistan National Council of Arts.

Zaire closes border with Rwanda

GOMA, Zaire (R) — Zaire has slammed shut its border with Rwanda despite Zairean officials repeatedly warning troops will expel any Rwandan refugees who remain at the end of the year.

"The border is closed for Rwandans and Zaireans, except for NGOs (non-governmental organisations) and other foreigners," said a Zairean army officer Saturday at a crossing in the town of Goma.

Zaire closed the border despite officials saying the forced expulsion of one million Rwandan refugees from Zaire will go ahead unless they all return home voluntarily by the end of the year.

The officer declined to say when Zaire would reopen the frontier but allowed foreign journalists from Reuters to cross.

The Rwandan government hit out at the sudden closure, saying it would impede the voluntary return of refugees. Relations between Zaire and Rwanda plunged to an all-time low last week.

"The Rwandan government deplores the Zairean government's unilateral decision to close its border with Rwanda," Rwandan Foreign Minister Anastase Gasana said on state Rwanda Radio.

"The measure serves to halt the voluntary repatriation of Rwandan refugees," added the minister, calling on Zaire to reverse its decision and saying the Rwandan border would remain open.

U.N. officials said Zaire had closed and opened its border with Rwanda several times in recent weeks apparently to show that it

was seriously concerned by the threat of infiltrators from Rwanda.

Zaire said a week ago that Rwandan Tutsis tried to assassinate the Zairean army chief of staff by placing bombs on his plane at Goma Airport and had been involved in several other attacks.

Rwanda rejected the Zairean accusations, saying they were aimed at covering up Zairean support for Rwandan Hutu troops and militiamen launching raids into Rwanda from bases in east Zaire.

Many of the million Hutu refugees in Zaire say they fear they will be killed in revenge for last year's Rwanda genocide.

Many are suspected of involvement in the genocide of up to one million Tutsis and Hutu moderates by Hutu troops, militiamen and

gangs. Hutu former troops and militiamen based in Zaire have also stepped up their attacks inside Rwanda in recent months.

"On the 31st of December no Rwandan refugees will be present in Zaire," Goma Urban Commissioner Masbako Mambasesi told Reuters. "Hospitality has its limits."

"If the refugees are here on the 31st of December, the Zairean government will do what it has to do," he said when asked if the army would forcibly expel remaining refugees.

Mr. Masbako said the government was increasingly concerned about the menace posed by land mines he said had killed 11 Zaireans in the past year. Aid agencies have also been hit by mine blasts.

U.N. launches attack on world hunger

BRUSSELS (R) — Village women from Senegal, Filipino farmers, aid agencies and international development groups will join forces Monday to launch a fresh attack on world hunger and poverty afflicting over one billion people.

The U.N.'s International Fund for Agricultural Development is bringing together activists of 400 grassroots groups, many from poor countries, to tell the World Bank and European Commission and other international donors how they tackle poverty.

"We're on one road, working together," conference organiser Bahman Mansuri told Reuters. "There's only one agenda."

The two-day gathering will hear how small farmers, women's and other community groups have devised schemes to produce more food and reclaim barren land and discuss how to spread such success across the globe.

"The projects are sustainable, affordable and benefit

the environment," said one U.N. official.

In drought-stricken Niger, small farmers revived a traditional water conservation technique to cultivate thousands of hectares of desertified land.

In the Casamance region of Senegal, village women helped develop a method to get rid of land salinity and reclaim swamps for producing food crops.

Part of the problem is that although most of the world's hungry live in rural areas they are too poor to own any land and can't afford to buy food supplies.

In the Philippines, farmers' groups pushed through land reforms allowing thousands of new farmers to start growing food in the southern part of the country.

In Brazil, an independent aid group created a large network of donors, including the church, to provide land and farm equipment for the poor in remote areas.

"The aim is to replicate such successes in partnership with grass root groups

in schemes involving the poor and hungry," Mr. Mansuri said.

The conference is expected to identify four priority areas for immediate action mobilising "people power":

— Give poor people the power to choose and decide small-scale projects to combat hunger and poverty.

— Ensure that agricultural research taps into local knowledge and new technology is adapted to the needs of poor people.

— Prevent food farming from causing soil erosion and desertification.

— Reduce the impact disasters on the poor, 80 per cent of whom live in drought-prone areas or in mountainous regions where farming is difficult.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development, created nearly 20 years ago to combat hunger and poverty in a cost effective way, pumps some \$350 million a year into small projects in more than 100 countries.

U.S. black activists divided over emphasising politics or spirituality

WASHINGTON (AP) — Led by the organisers of the million man march, hundreds of black activists gathered in hopes of agreeing on a common agenda for political and social change.

But at a nationally televised town hall meeting, tensions surfaced between those who wanted to emphasise spiritual renewal and others who said the focus should be on working more through the political system.

In the end, there was general agreement that both strategies were needed.

The Rev. Jesse Jackson said he was worried that in the aftermath of the Washington march by black men last month, "our energy is not as connected to public policy as it should be."

Rev. Jackson, a civil rights veteran and former presidential candidate, said the movement of the 1950s through the 1970s was successful because it sought specific political goals like voting rights and an end to segregation.

"If Newt Gingrich is still

the speaker of the House next fall, we've failed," he said, calling for a renewed focus on political power to combat conservatives in Congress.

But others on the panel assembled for the National African-American Leadership Summit said the focus must first be on spiritual and moral values.

"After the 1960s, after Dr. (Martin Luther) King's death, God was put out of the movement," said Benjamin Chavis Jr., who organised last month's march alongside nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan.

Joseph Lowery, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, praised the focus on spirituality and self-help, but said blacks were not the only ones in moral crisis.

"The soul of America is in peril," he said, "and we are the source, I believe, that can save America."

The summit's goals include creating an economic development fund for black businesses, starting a health care plan to focus on black needs, and

possibly staging a "black political convention" before the 1996 elections.

Hugh Price, president of the National Urban League, described the meeting as "a very serious effort to figure out what the areas of common ground are among African-American organisations."

In an interview, Mr. Price called the economic development trust "an intriguing idea" but said he did not have enough details to determine whether it was feasible.

"We're weighing how deeply to get involved," Mr. Price said of his organisation.

Mr. Price and Mr. Lowery were among several black officials attending a meeting sponsored by the African-American Leadership Summit for the first time.

Mr. Chavis, founder of the summit, said more than 500 people signed up for the summit, four times the number who attended the past four conferences combined.

Indian police hunt for Tamil rebel on suicide mission to kill Rao

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Indian police were continuing a search for a woman suicide bomber, suspected to be a Sri Lankan Tamil rebel, who entered India on a mission to assassinate Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, newspapers said Sunday.

Newspapers said police and federal detectives were continuing search operations in the southern town of Puttaparthi in Andhra Pradesh state and neighbouring Kerala province to arrest the suspected Tamil separatist.

"Sources said the travel documents of over 16,000 people, especially Sri Lankans, had been veri-

fied," the Asian Age daily said.

Mr. Rao returned here from Puttaparthi late Saturday after a two-day visit to southern India. He spent the last leg of his two-day tour in Puttaparthi, the headquarters of Sai Baba, a Hindu guru revered by millions the world over.

Intelligence sources in the Indian capital said Mr. Rao had been kept under tight security in Puttaparthi and in the Kerala capital, Thiruvananthapuram, following a tip-off from Sri Lankan authorities about the suicide bomber.

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike is scheduled to visit the Kerala

town of Konakal, a centre of the indigenous Ayurveda system of medicine, for treatment Monday.

The suspected bomber was identified as Kandhammani Paskaran, a member of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebel group, they said, adding that she was in her early thirties.

Ms. Paskaran reportedly entered India a month ago. Former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was killed by a woman suicide bomber on May 21, 1991 in the southern town of Sriperumbudur in Tamil Nadu province while on an election rally.

Mr. Gandhi was poised to return to power.

EU expected to strike deal on TV programme quotas

BRUSSELS (R) — European Union (EU) culture ministers are expected to agree Monday to keep, but not strengthen, controversial quotas aimed at combating Hollywood domination of Europe's television screens.

Spain, current holder of the rotating EU presidency, is confident that after months of stalemate it has found a formula that can end a dispute between countries that want stricter quotas and those that want to scrap them altogether.

"We do think a political agreement will be reached," a Spanish diplomat told Reuters.

An accord Monday will not end the debate over how to update the EU's 1989 "television without frontiers" directive, which requires broadcasters to devote a majority of screen time to European programmes "where practicable".

The European Parliament must still give its opinion before the legislation can be adopted. And EU states will have to finalise technical details after Monday's meeting.

But if a deal is struck, it would be a major step towards ending a debate that has preoccupied the EU and its filmmakers for almost two years — how to help European movie and TV producers compete against U.S. blockbusters and cheap sitcoms.

Some countries, especially France, see quotas as a key weapon in that campaign and they wanted the EU to toughen its rules by removing the two words "where practicable".

They considered that a major loophole that was being exploited by operators such as U.S. magnate Ted Turner's satellite film and cartoon channel, broadcast from Britain.

Other countries, however, including Britain and Germany, never liked the quotas and were anxious to get rid of them.

Spain's compromise would maintain the status quo. It would leave the current rules unchanged and set up a committee of experts to oversee them and conduct a review after five years.

France is willing to accept that deal because a proposal to limit the quotas to 10 years has been dropped, diplomats said.

Germany is still fighting to set a time limit on the quotas, but diplomats and officials said they expected the Spanish compromise to be accepted as it is.

The U.S. film industry, which has bitterly criticised the EU's import limits in the past, has kept a low profile.

Jack Valenti, chairman of the Motion Picture Association of America, recently offered to help Europe's film industry by training young producers.



MISS WORLD 1995: Outgoing Miss World 1994, Aishwarya Rai, hands over the crown to incoming Miss World 1995, Jacqueline Aguilera Marciano from Venezuela while first princess Anica Martinovic from Croatia applauds, in Sun City north west of Johannesburg (AFP photo)

Guards regain control of Greek prison

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — Guards regained control of the nation's largest prison Sunday after inmates returned to their cells, ending a five day prisoner revolt in which four people died and 50 were hospitalised.

The revolt's end at Korydallos Prison in Athens followed intense negotiations by Justice Ministry officials with prisoners and guards in the past few days.

"We insisted that the solution should be the result of dialogue and not of force. Dialogue bore fruit. It created a climate that allowed normality to return and the prison to function," Justice Minister Ioannis Pottakis told reporters.

He also said that the government would honour its promise to prisoners for improved medical treatment and living conditions.

"What we promised in these days we will turn into reality," he said.

A delegation including public prosecutors, political party representatives and lawyers entered the 1,400-inmate prison to witness the prisoners handing over control to the guards.

The rebellion began Tuesday when prisoners took eight staff members hostage. They released the hostages Thursday but guards refused to return to the prison, saying it was unsafe.

The government had promised throughout that it would not use riot police to

restore order in the prison, and appealed to the inmates to put an end to the rebellion themselves.

Guards had initially listed their own demands for returning to work, including more pay and time off. But by Saturday evening all they wanted was for a delegation to witness the condition of the prison when they took over.

Delegation members told reporters after coming out that everything but individual cells had been destroyed, including the pharmacy, kitchens, visiting rooms and clinic.

"This is no longer a prison. It is a group of buildings without function," Antonis Roupakiotis, a lawyer in the group, told Athens SKAI Radio Station.

Mr. Pottakis said that a mobile clinic would be set up at the prison and outside caterers would provide food for the next five days. He had no immediate estimate of the damage, although a few days ago his ministry estimated it at about \$2 million.

Police Saturday identified a prisoner who had been beaten, banded and burned by fellow inmates Friday as Dimitris Karamouzis, a 27-year-old who was serving time for theft. It was not clear who had killed him nor what the motive was. Earlier, police had said he was an Albanian, then that he was an African.

Another three Greek pris-

oners died from drug overdoses after looting the prison pharmacy. Ambulances left the prison in a steady stream through the rebellion with inmates who were hurt in fights or had overdosed on drugs.

Riot police were stationed around the prison in the working class suburb of Korydallos to deter escape attempts but, apart from occupying an adjacent administration building, were not used to storm the facility.

Scores of juvenile prisoners were removed from the prison for their protection and 100 foreign inmates were to be transferred to ease overcrowding.

Mr. Pottakis came under intense criticism from opposition parties and even members of the ruling Socialist Party for allegedly not doing enough to end the rebellion.

"The death sentence has been abolished. I don't want to introduce it through the back door," Mr. Pottakis said Saturday, commenting on why he did not want to allow riot police to end the insurrection.

The government has promised to remove the prison from Korydallos. It was originally built in the 1970s as a maximum security facility for 500 prisoners. Now inmates range from people awaiting trial for misdemeanors to convicted murderers and coup plotters.

Japan cult leader reportedly admits ordering rifle production

TOKYO (AP) — Interrogators of the Aum Shinri Kyo doomsday cult leader say he admits he ordered followers to manufacture 1,000 military rifles in a bizarre plan to take over the world, a news report said Saturday.

Police said Shoko Asahara told them at least one rifle prototype had been produced at a cult-run factory late last year based on a Russian design, the Kyodo News Service reported.

Asahara and some of his followers are accused of carrying out the March 20 release of the nerve gas Sarin in Tokyo's subways, and a long list of other crimes, including numerous

murders.

The March 20 attack killed 12 people and made more than 5,500 sick.

Police searches of cult property have yielded tonnes of rifle parts, illegal drugs, ingredients for Sarin, and evidence of research into biological, laser and conventional weapons.

Asahara frequently predicted a world war, after which a shadow government maintained by his top lieutenants was to take control of the world, through its own guerrilla war if necessary.

The 40-year-old guru and dozens of his top followers have been under near constant interrogation for

months as prosecutors build cases against them and prepare indictments. Asahara, who has been in custody since June, faces nearly a dozen serious charges including murder counts.

Interrogations in Japan are in secret, and human rights groups say coerced confessions help police achieve their 99 per cent conviction rate in criminal cases that go to court.

Police contacted Saturday would neither confirm nor deny the Kyodo report of Asahara's admissions.

Asahara was scheduled to go on trial in late October, but his trial was postponed when he fired, then re-hired his main lawyer.

Diana rules out divorce in interview

LONDON (R) — Princess Diana does not want a divorce, is not trying to destroy the monarchy and has no plans to leave Britain or let the country down, according to leaked reports of a surprise television interview.

Up to 200 million viewers worldwide are expected to see the interview with journalist Martin Bashir on the British Broadcasting Corporation's (BBC) Panorama news programme when it is aired around the globe Monday.

In the exclusive hour-long chat with the little-known BBC journalist that was conducted without Queen Elizabeth's knowledge or approval, Princess Diana admits that her marriage to Prince Charles, the heir-to-the-throne, is over.

"It is sad when a marriage breaks up, but here it is. These things happen," she says, according to aspects of the programme described to the Sunday Telegraph newspaper.

But when asked directly if she wants a divorce, Princess Diana replies: "No. There are two children involved."

Her young sons, Princes William and Harry, are also cited as her reason for never leaving Britain and why she is not seeking to harm the royal family.

"Why should I wish to destroy my chil-

dren's future," she asks.

But those expecting titillating revelations about her private life in what has been billed as "Diana's prime time revenge" could be disappointed.

Buckingham Palace officials, who were infuriated that they had not been consulted by the princess, have been told to expect something "rather bland", the Sunday Telegraph said.

Instead of a venomous attack on Prince Charles for his admission in a television documentary 18 months ago that he had committed adultery after his marriage had broken down, Princess Diana focuses on her future.

"I don't want pity, I have more dignity than that. I'm strong, here to serve, and happy to do it," she says, adding that she sees her role as "supporting the country around the world".

The secrecy surrounding the interview had heightened speculation that the princess would reveal secrets of her royal life and the acrimonious breakup of her marriage.

The Sunday Times reported that BBC executives withheld news of the interview from BBC Chairman Marmaduke Hussey. Mr. Hussey's wife Susan is lady-in-waiting to Queen Elizabeth.

School-leavers and 'hangers-on' cause havoc

BRISBANE (AFP) — Australia's tourist capital of the gold coast erupted this weekend, as thousands of drunken school-leavers and partygoers rampaged through the area. Gold Coast police made 113 arrests on Friday and Saturday night, mostly for drunkenness and offensive behaviour, but said the majority of those detained were not school-leavers, but people in their early 20s who gatecrashed the celebrations. Thousands of school-leavers — or "schoolies", as they are known — descend on the Gold Coast, in the northern state of Queensland, from all over Australia at this time each year, to celebrate the end of their final high school examinations. This year's celebrations drew, as bees to honey, some 15,000 schoolies and older teenagers. Police said the schoolies, most aged 17 or 18 years, often have far too much to drink but cause less problems than the older revellers. "We want the kids to enjoy themselves, but the problem we have is with the few bludgers who bang off them," Queensland Deputy Premier Tom Burns said. And as glass bottles flew and crowd numbers swelled Saturday night, police, fearing a riot, closed off the main pedestrian mall in the Gold Coast's tourist centre, Surfers Paradise.

Comic book covers take in thousands at auction

NEW YORK (R) — Comic book fans including tennis star John McEnroe shelled out more than \$200,000 Saturday for memorabilia of their favourite superheroes, but most were recreations rather than the real thing. The Christie's auction raised \$205,36, including \$8,625 for a cover of a Fantastic Four comic book, which like most at the sale was recreated by the original artist after the original was destroyed or went into private hands. Another unidentified buyer paid \$5,750 for a recreation of the 40th issue of the Amazing Spiderman, showing Spiderman facing his nemesis, the Green Goblin. "We used to give them away — to the guy who delivered lunch, to the cleaning lady. We'd say, 'do you want some art? Keep it or throw it away,'" said Stan Lee, creator of Spiderman, the Incredible Hulk, the Fantastic Four and the X-men.

Birds, droppings plague Missouri city

MEXICO, Mo. (R) — More than 30,000 starlings have swooped into this small Missouri town, bombarding the central district with droppings and creating a slimy health hazard. "People won't walk on the sidewalks and the park benches are covered with poop," said city manager Tom Parrott. "Some uncovered car lots have had to repaint cars because of the droppings. It's become quite a health hazard." Sue Caine, who heads the local chamber of commerce, said the birds arrived in Mexico, a central Missouri town of 12,000, during the summer. The problem became more noticeable, however, as the temperature dropped and the days shortened. The birds feed in nearby grain fields and return to town at sunset to roost in the dense pear trees that ring the village square, said Maury Bedford, a wildlife biologist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. "The trees in question have very dense limbs and leaves that provide a lot of cover for the birds during the cold night," said Mr. Bedford, who was called in to find a solution.



Princess Alexandra and Prince Joachim of Denmark (centre) are flanked by members of their families during the photo call following their royal wedding at Frederiksborg Castle (AFP photo)

Hong Kong economist becomes Danish princess

COPENHAGEN (R) — Hong Kong economist Alexandra Manley joined Europe's oldest royal family Saturday when she married Denmark's Prince Joachim, second in line to his country's throne.

Wearing a dress of white Italian silk with a four-metre-long train and a mantle embroidered with 8,900 pearls, she sat and knelt next to Prince Joachim, who wore a naval uniform, during the one-hour Lutheran service in the chapel of Frederiksborg Castle, 35 kilometres north of the capital.

Among 350 guests in the picturesque renaissance church were the kings and queens of Norway and Sweden, ex-King Constantine of Greece and royals and nobles from all over Europe, including Britain's Prince Edward, a distant cousin of the groom.

The flower-decked chapel was ablaze with colour, the women sparkling with jewels and wearing silk and satin gowns and many of the men in military dress uniforms.

As the bride's father, Richard, led her down the aisle the Copenhagen Boys' Choir sang Handel's anthem, The King Shall Rejoice. The groom's parents, Queen Margrethe and Prince Henrik, entered to a fanfare from the Royal Life Guard.

Driving snow that marred the couple's ceremonial carriage ride through Copenhagen Friday gave way to bright sunshine Saturday morning, but snow had begun to fall again as the marriage service ended, making it a truly white wedding.

Princess Alexandra, a 31-year-old British citizen whose father is of English and Chinese descent and whose Austrian mother, Christa, has Polish roots, joins a long line of foreign consorts to Danish royalty.

Of the 51 kings and queens of the dynasty, founded in AD 985, only four have married Danes.

Prince Joachim's French-born father, Prince Henrik, was Count Henri De Laborde De Montpezat before his marriage to then-Princess Margrethe in 1967, Denmark's last royal wedding.

Queen Margrethe's father, King Frederik, wed Swedish Princess Ingrid, a great-great-granddaughter of Britain's Queen Victoria.

After the service guests drove to nearby Fredensborg Palace for a gala banquet of goose liver, lobster, stuffed pheasant and a coconut and cream desert, to be followed by fireworks and dancing.

Palace officials are keeping the newlyweds' honeymoon plans a secret, refusing to divulge their timetable or destination in an effort to protect their privacy.

On their return they will set up home in Schackenborg Castle on the Jutland peninsula, near the frontier with Germany.

The 26-year-old prince met his bride two years ago in Hong Kong where she was an investment company executive and he worked for Danish shipping firm Maersk.

Baptised an Anglican, she was confirmed into the Danish Lutheran Church in a private ceremony Monday.

The wedding has gripped the imagination of Danes, who despite their fiercely egalitarian society have a deep affection for their royal family and have adopted the princess-to-be with enthusiasm.

Dudayev: Rebels won't relent until Russians leave

GROZNY, Russia (AP) — Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev, who has been in hiding for months, emerged to tell journalists the rebels won't budge from their demand that Russian troops leave unconditionally.

Only after full withdrawal, he said at a carefully arranged news conference Friday, can the Russians and Chechens work out differences that have stymied peace efforts since last summer.

"All the differences with Moscow can be settled in 30 minutes," Mr. Dudayev, wearing his military uniform and hat, said in remarks aired Saturday on Russian television.

He sat in front of a large green, red and black Chechen flag during the meeting with reporters. The Interfax News Agency said it occurred in a private house in the Urus-Martan area, 20 kilometres south of the Chechen capital Grozny.

Mr. Dudayev reiterated his call for a United Nations peacekeeping force to be stationed in Chechnya "for control and interaction."

Months after the Russians established control over much of the Caucasus Mountains republic, the separatist Chechens still boast a fighting force of about 6,000, according to Russian media reports.

"With peace negotiations stalled, both sides have reported an increase in clashes lately. Neither has complied with a July agreement which calls for the rebels to disarm and Russia to pull out most of its troops."

The two sides accuse each other of planning an offensive timed to coincide with the campaign for Russian parliamentary elections on Dec. 17.

"We must continue to rely on force," Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev told the daily Nezavisimaya Gazeta in an interview published Saturday. "That doesn't exclude peace talks, but whom we can talk with? Who are these negotiators? All of them are accidental people."

"Two processes must go on there at the same time — talks and combat operations," Gen. Grachev said. "Combat operations should come as an answer to any rebel shelling of federal troops."

Moscow wants to hold elections in Chechnya on Dec. 17, the same day as nationwide Russian balloting, to name a new Chechen leader and deputies to the Russian parliament. But the plan has met with stiff resistance.

Mr. Dudayev said elections should be held only after Russian troops leave.

"I am for elections, but I serve the people and obey their will," said Mr. Dudayev, who was elected Chechnya's president in 1991 in a vote the Russians say was illegal.

The Moscow-backed Chechen parliament Saturday formally endorsed the election of a Chechen leader on Dec. 17, the ITAR-TASS news agency said. But the parliament did not debate elections to Russian parliament.

2 men arrested at Taiwan president's campaign rally

TAIPEI (AFP) — Two men were arrested Sunday with a loaded pistol and ammunition as they neared Taiwanese President Lee Teng-Hui, who was making a campaign appearance, police said.

The two denied intending to attack the president and claimed they happened to be passing through the area, police said, adding they failed to explain why the gun was loaded.

Police later sent the pair to the district prosecutor's office on initial charges of illegal possession of firearms. They were investigating if the two had any alleged intention to kill the president, the officer said.

Earlier Sunday, a chief aide of Taiwan's left-wing Labour Party was arrested as he attempted to break through a security cordon around Premier Lien Chan at a parliamentary election rally, police said.

Security officers seized Kao Wei-Kai, 25, a deputy campaign manager for Labour Party candidate Wang Li-Hsia, as he tried to force his way past them, apparently reaching into his pocket. He was later released after police found he was not carrying a weapon.

Asked by reporters later why he had reached into his pocket, Mr. Kao said: "I only wanted to give Lien a report on labor human rights condition in Taiwan."

The parliamentary elections will be held on Dec. 2.

Former Canadian premier to sue government

MONTREAL (R) — Former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney will file a 50 million Canadian dollar (\$37 million) lawsuit against the Canadian government because of "false and reckless allegations" that he received illegal payments to influence Air Canada's decision to buy Airbus aircraft in 1988, his attorney said Saturday.

The announcement of the huge suit, which will also name the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), followed reports in Canadian newspapers Saturday that the Canadian Justice Department has named Mr. Mulroney in a letter asking Swiss authorities to look into allegations of dubious payments linked to the Airbus purchase.

"Based on unsubstantiated reports in the media and an unidentified source, the RCMP and the Department of Justice have proceeded to make scurrilous suggestions that are unfounded and that have caused incalculable damage to Mr. Mulroney and his family," Mr. Mulroney's attorney Gerald Tremblay said in a statement.

"The recklessness and wilful disregard for the most elementary principles of fairness and decency in this case are monumental," the statement said.

Mr. Tremblay said the suit, which is to be filed in Quebec Superior Court in Montreal Monday, will state that the allegations made by the Canadian Justice Department in a letter to the Swiss authorities are false and generated by media speculation.

The Financial Post newspaper reported Saturday that the Justice Department had asked Swiss authorities on Sept. 29 for information to support allegations of "criminal activities carried out by the former prime minister."

The letter names Mr. Mulroney in connection with alleged payments linked to a \$1.8 billion Air Canada purchase of 34 A320 aircraft from Airbus Industrie in 1988, the newspaper reported.

Mr. Mulroney, a Conservative, was prime minister from 1984 to 1993 and Air Canada was government-owned at the time.

Mr. Mulroney's lawyer said the Swiss government uses language which leads the reader to believe that the then-prime minister received illegal commissions through a numbered Swiss bank account in exchange for influencing Air Canada's decision.

180 die in Sri Lanka fighting, troops at Jaffna's gates

COLOMBO (AFP) — At least 180 people including Tamil Tiger guerrillas and soldiers were killed as fighting escalated in Sri Lanka after the troops advanced to the gates of the rebel citadel of Jaffna, the military said.

Nearly 80 guerrillas and 12 soldiers were killed as fierce battles erupted in the northern Jaffna peninsula, where the troops remained poised to storm the town for the first time in five years, military officials said.

Military spokesman Sarath Munasinghe retracted earlier claims that the army entered Jaffna capturing the temple complex of Nallur, a stronghold of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) within the town limits.

"The wrong report originated from the main military base in Jaffna and was mistakenly picked-up in Colombo by authorities, he added. "The troops are still outside the (Jaffna) City limits."

The earlier claim was broadcast by the state-run radio.

The LTTE, determined to ease mounting army pressure on its bastion of Jaffna, struck in the island's east Sunday, killing at least 38 soldiers and wounding 24 in an ambush near a railway track, the military said.

The ambush sparked a fierce two-hour gunbattle which also killed 50 LTTE fighters, the military added.

The day saw the heaviest fighting since Sri Lanka ordered its major military offensive on Oct. 17 to wrest the Jaffna peninsula from the Tigers, who have controlled it since 1990.

The Sri Lankan army has not set foot in Jaffna since hundreds of soldiers were evacuated from the Dutch-built Jaffna Fort by helicopters en masse in 1990 following a prolonged LTTE siege.

The military earlier said thousands of soldiers backed by tanks and artillery entered Jaffna seizing Nallur, seven hours after resuming their drive at dawn.

A column of several thousand soldiers advancing towards Jaffna on another axis captured Thirunelveli town on the outskirts, preparing for a final assault which the military has warned would be bloody.

"The advance is progressing well," a military spokesman said. Tamil sources described the imminent fall of Jaffna, capital of the LTTE's de facto state, as a severe blow to the Tamil Tigers, who have vowed to defend it to the last man.

At least 280 soldiers and 1,500 guerrillas have died since the military offensive began. Thousands have been wounded on both sides.

Sunday's bloody battles came a day after top army field commander Major General Roban Daluwatte vowed to take Jaffna.

"We will be in Jaffna in a few days," the state-run television quoted him as saying. "It will bring a ray of hope for the Tamil people."

A total of 15,000 soldiers are taking part in the offensive code-named Rivirasa (Sunshine). The military said it expected further battles to be bloody as the army would have to fight street-by-street to take Jaffna.

Also Sunday, the LTTE claimed responsibility for Saturday's downing of a Chinese-built Y-8 aircraft as it prepared to land at the Palaly base in Jaffna. It was the fourth air force plane downed by the LTTE since April.

Deputy Defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte said Sunday the fall of Jaffna would not end the separatist campaign which has claimed more than 50,000 lives in two decades.

"The taking of Jaffna will not mark the end of the ongoing military onslaught against the LTTE," he said.

Republican poll tips Dole as presidential candidate

ORLANDO, Florida (R) — Senate majority leader Bob Dole Saturday won a hard-fought Republican presidential preference vote seen as a major test of support and organization.

Texas Senator Phil Gramm scored a strong second place.

Sen. Dole won with just over a third of the 3,325 votes cast by Republican activists in Florida. Sen. Gramm was just seven percentage points behind and former Tennessee Governor Lamar Alexander was third with 22.5 per cent.

The three spent millions of dollars on the non-binding poll which took on strong symbolic significance as the last big event of the 1995 political year.

Republicans will begin choosing their nominee to face President Bill Clinton in the November 1996 election in a series of state primaries and caucuses beginning in February.

Only two other men in the eight-man field made an impact, although both were vastly outpaced by the top three. Political commentator Pat Buchanan got nine per cent and radio talk show host Alan Keyes won eight per cent, both after delivering passionate appeals to anti-abortion activists.

Speaking for Sen. Dole, deputy campaign manager Bill Lacy said: "We're ecstatic. It confirms that Bob Dole is the overwhelming frontrunner, that we're in control of this campaign and that Bob Dole will be the nominee."

Sen. Gramm said the race for the Republican presidential nomination was now between him and Sen. Dole and it was clear that many Republicans did not believe that Sen. Dole could beat Mr. Clinton.

"It's not good for Senator Dole that 67 per cent of the voters here voted against him. It's very good for me that I ran a strong second," he said.

Sen. Dole took no chances after being embarrassed last August when he tied a similar non-binding poll in Iowa. This time, the Kansas senator spent over \$2 million, wooing delegates with chocolates, toiletries and other gifts. He laid on free food, music and entertainment and bought exclusive rights to use a hotel TV channel to play his campaign video nonstop.

Reading from cue cards, Sen. Dole told delegates before the vote: "Why do I want to be president? Because I will not permit the slow decline of the country I love so much. Because I am convinced that America's finest hour is not a memory but a goal."

Sen. Dole said he would reign in a runaway federal government because it had become hostile to the interests of citizens. "We will not rest until we return sanity and morality to the policies and programmes of our government," he said.

Bangladesh may call in army to supervise elections

DHAKA (R) — Bangladesh's Election Commission said it might call in the army to help conduct voting in parliamentary polls peacefully as the feuding opposition and government prepared for a showdown.

"The next parliamentary elections are likely to be held in phases and the armed forces will be invited to keep peace during the voting, one commission official said Sunday.

The move reaffirms the commission's fears that the elections could be marred by violence as opposition parties have threatened to boycott and resist elections under Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia.

They want Mrs. Khaleda to step down and allow the polls to be supervised by a neutral caretaker authority, preferably one headed by the chief justice, Abu Taher Mohammad Afzal.

Mrs. Khaleda, elected in 1991 in what were billed as Bangladesh's first free polls, has rejected the demands as unconstitutional.

In what government sources described as her last appeal, Mrs. Khaleda Saturday night invited opposition parties again to talks to discuss all matters under an open agenda.

Opposition parties spurned the offer, saying there could be no talks unless Mrs. Khaleda accepted in principle their demand for a caretaker administration.

"Opposition will never sit for a free-style discussion," said Mohammad Nasim, a senior leader of the main opposition group Awami League. "nor will (it) allow polls bypassing the opposition," he said.

Major opposition parties Saturday boycotted a meeting with chief election commissioner Justice A.K.M. Sadeque, which political analysts said reaffirmed the opposition's resolve to boycott the elections.

The elections are due in March 1996 but leaders of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) said it could be held in January as Mrs. Khaleda was expected to dissolve the parliament in a few days.

Analysts said parliament had virtually become a "one-party show" after opposition legislators resigned in December accusing the government of rigging a parliamentary by-election and of sweeping corruption. The BNP has rejected the charges.

"With the passage of time people have started believing that elections under the BNP will not be fair. Such fears intensified as the BNP firmly refused to have an election under a non-partisan authority," one Asian diplomat said Sunday.

He said the opposition was in a dilemma over their next move after a recent six-day national strike. "People are getting bored, frustrated and even annoyed over such programmes," he said.

Bangladesh's business community, especially the small traders and menial workers, have openly protested against stoppages and asked the opposition to find any alternative.

Government officials said a day of stoppage cost the country about \$15 million in economic losses.

Walesa's presidency is in the balance

GDANSK, Poland (R) — Poles voted Sunday on whether to retain fiery former shipyard worker Lech Walesa, who defied and defeated Communist rule in the 1980s, or dismiss him as president in favour of a reformed former Communist.

Defeat at the hands of 41-year-old Aleksander Kwasniewski would be a bitter blow for the man whose anti-Communist strike crusade sent shivers across the Soviet Bloc in the 1980s.

In Gdansk, home of the Lenin Shipyard where he founded his Solidarity trade union 15 years ago, supporters circled town in cars trailing pro-Walesa banners. Others, defying a campaigning ban, pasted thousands of posters in a lightning action.

Catholic Cardinal Jozef Glemp showed as little restraint.

"This is a choice between two people and two value systems... A set of Christian values and a system that I would call neo-pagan," he told reporters after voting in Warsaw.

But support of clergy could be a mixed blessing when many are disillusioned over the church's political conservatism.

In the capital, voters braved icy temperatures.

"I voted for Kwasniewski," said 48-year-old Andrzej Kosinski, after voting. "I have always supported the left. I am a worker and I haven't changed my beliefs as some others have."

Surveys suggest that, five years after communism collapsed, the population may be contemplating something once unthinkable — replacing Walesa by a former Communist minister.

But the race has been close since the ex-Communist edged ahead of Mr. Walesa in a preliminary election two weeks ago. Late embarrassments in Mr. Kwasniewski's campaign could weigh heavily.

More than once in an emotional campaign Mr. Walesa, now 52 and his trademark moustache grey, has needed his rival with the sneering term "Bolshevik."

Mr. Kwasniewski says he stayed in the party after Solidarity was crushed and Mr. Walesa interned under martial law in 1981 only to push for reform from within.

Mr. Kwasniewski, well-groomed, articulate representative of a new generation of East European reformed communists, says there is no return to the old "people's Poland." Far from being the man to restore communism, he says, he is the most capable of leading his country into NATO and the European Union.

"Many bazzards and dangers lie ahead of Poland," Mr. Walesa said in a final televised broadcast. "I know how to guide Poland safely to the far side — from independence to stability."

But even many of those who back Mr. Walesa do so with a heavy heart, wary of a pugnacious style often more suited to the popular rally than the humdrum of everyday politics.

Mr. Kwasniewski says he would end clashes between presidency and a government led by his own Democratic Left Alliance (SLD).

But Mr. Walesa supporters argue that if the SLD captures the presidency it will be free of all restraint and will pack its supporters into posts throughout government and business. One party in control of government, parliament and presidency could, they say, be more than Poles could risk again.

Though conducted with great panache, Mr. Kwasniewski's campaign encountered set-backs in the final days.

Mr. Kwasniewski acknowledged a mistake in failing to declare his wife's holdings in a firm. It also emerged he had made an error in claiming to have a degree from Gdansk University.

Despite dire predictions flung around in the campaign, no fundamental issues of economic or foreign policy are at stake.

Both candidates agree on the need for market reforms but differ on priorities. Mr. Kwasniewski stresses a need to ease social hardships that have marked the economic transition while Mr. Walesa calls for broader, faster privatisation.

Jordan Times

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Fresh hope for Algeria

THE ELECTION of Liamine Zeroual as the new president of Algeria by a margin of 61 per cent of voters has been rightly hailed as the foundation on which full democracy, peace and stability can be restored in the war-torn country. On the positive side, the big voter turnout, estimated by the government to have exceeded 75 per cent of all eligible voters but disputed by the main opposition parties and some foreign observers, indicates the Algerians still have faith in democracy.

Of equal importance was the relative tranquillity that marked the election day on Friday. In spite of the threats of violence by Islamists against voters, an overwhelming majority of Algerians turned out to cast their ballot. The government was so confident of that it had invited observers from the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the Arab League to act as watch-dogs over the elections.

What is more significant than these encouraging signs, though, is the promise made by President Zeroual on the eve of his election to engage the major opposition party, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), in a dialogue to end division and bloodshed. The FIS is still a formidable force in Algeria which in 1991 was projected to win national elections. Equally promising is the readiness of the FIS to enter into a constructive dialogue with the elected president. Rabah Kebir, one of the FIS leaders, was reported to have told France's TF1 television Saturday that his group was "ready for dialogue with the ruling power so that we can contribute to a return to peace in Algeria."

The bright future ushered in by the election of President Zeroual in seemingly free and peaceful elections would be short-lived if there is no follow-up on the reciprocal offers of negotiations in the shortest possible time. President Zeroual is now so firmly entrenched in legitimate power that he can take measured and calculated risks to advance the cause of ultimate peace and national reconciliation in his country. The three-year old civil strife that took a heavy toll on the lives and properties of Algerians cannot be expected to end effectively without a true national reconciliation. More than 40,000 Algerians have lost their lives already and this bloodshed must cease forthwith. President Zeroual and the leadership of the FIS hold the key to the end of the blood bath and hopefully they will use it wisely and prudently.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE FACT that the Algerian people turned out in great numbers to vote in the presidential elections and have elected Liamine Zeroual, a moderate, as president reflects the desire to see an end to bloodshed and the start of democratic rule, said Tareq Masarweh in Al Ra'i daily. The writer said that Mr. Zeroual was elected because he is strongly supported by the military and because he is willing to open a dialogue with the opposition group, including the Islamists. What he is doing now and the steps he has taken to pave the ground for parliamentary elections next year indicate that he is determined to go along the democratic path to the end, said the writer. Also the fact that a moderate Islamist had run for the elections and won one million votes indicates that the Islamic movement is willing to accept the democratic process and that the majority of the Islamists do not support the extremist groups who have been burning schools, blowing up oil installations and killing innocent civilians, added the writer. On the whole, the results of the elections showed that the Algerian people abhor violence and armed conflict and have opted for giving the president an opportunity to unite the Algerians behind him and save the country from divisions and bloodshed.

A WRITER in Al Dustour discussed the redeployment of Israeli troops in the West Bank, saying that the boisterous of the Palestinian flag on Jenin invoked deep national sentiments and rekindled hopes for a liberated and an independent Palestine. Taher Adwan said that supporters and opponents of the peace process could differ in views over the whole issue but the facts on the ground speak clearly and point to the fact that the Palestinian towns are liberated gradually to the great joy of Palestinian citizens. Arabs had betted on the failure of the intifada and at doubts about and Israeli withdrawal, and yet, the pullout of forces is continuing and the intifada proved successful after all, following years of struggle and bloodshed. While admitting that the peace process on the Palestinian track is complicated and slow, one has also to confess that the withdrawals have created a new atmosphere that is conducive to enhancing the peace process and the achievement of a comprehensive settlement on all tracks, added the writer.

Human Rights File

A life-long concern for human rights

By Dr. Waleed M. Sa'di

I THINK we can all agree that His Majesty King Hussein's 60th birthday was no ordinary milestone in his reign. Many of us viewed the King's birthday last week in different lights, depending on our own personal associations or experiences with him. No wonder many citizens and commentators showered the occasion with many personal anecdotes that they regarded as symbolic of the Monarch's unique personal and official attributes. From a human rights vantage point, I have no difficulty in remembering my own personal contacts with the King that may shed some light on his personal role in advancing the cause of human rights in the country.

There is no better way to start this chapter than to recall a personal anecdote with His Majesty in the mid-sixties when I was the assistant chief of royal protocol. As a young and naive man just out of university life in the U.S., I started my career at the Royal Court with the conviction that honesty and candour are the pillars of success. I took this premise to task and extreme risk when one day I walked into the King's office at the conclusion of the daily audiences with him and told him point-blank that his policy on a certain foreign policy issue was "totally wrong!"

Now tell me where in the whole wide world can a junior official walk into the office of the head of state and tell him that he was completely wrong on a matter and get away with it unscathed. I not only survived my extreme sense of naivete, but was actually encouraged by King Hussein to persevere in my candid approach to matters of public interest. I still recollect that instead of getting upset with my intervention, His Majesty asked me with maximum politeness to sit down and explain to him why I thought he was all wrong. Of course, I failed in that test but the point for me was well made. King Hussein, even in his early twenties, demonstrated such a high threshold for tolerance and open-mindedness that could not be matched anywhere in the world. To make a long story short, King Hussein demanded of me to keep talking to him straight and to bring to his attention matters of even personal concerns with utmost directness and frankness.

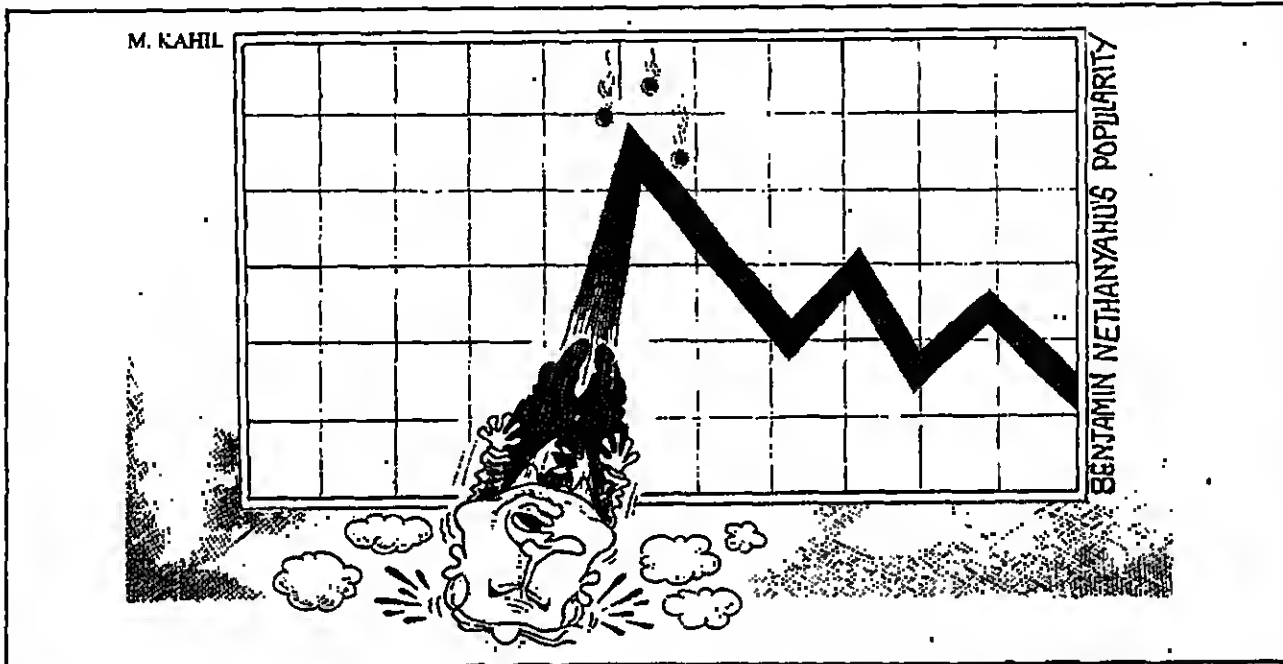
This introduction brings me closer to the heart of the matter of human rights and King Hussein. Through the phenomenon of audiences with the King, which was available literally to all people who would ask for it, the King was performing the function of a human rights ombudsman in every sense of the word. In the turbulent

1960s life was not easy. Human rights was hardly a subject that enjoyed high priority consideration even in the most advanced countries of the world. At the local scene, human rights violations were seldom highlighted or redressed. Those were the days when the country was threatened from without and from within. The Kingdom was hardly standing on its own feet amidst external and internal designs and challenges that made the overall climate inopportune to promote human rights.

And this is where King Hussein's personal intervention used to function as the cushion that the public would rely on whenever they had to air grievances against the government or each other. I would venture to say that 99 per cent of the time, King Hussein responded favourably to any complaint that was brought to his attention and had it remedied in the swiftest possible time. In a sense the authorities were not always in complete tune with the King when it comes to human rights. As the old adage says: King Hussein was in a valley and the government was in a different one when it comes to humanism and human rights. It soon dawned on me and many others who were fortunate enough to have his ears during an audience that the King's natural humanistic temperament made his interventions on the side of human rights natural, spontaneous and automatic as if they were inborn reflexes.

However, with complexity of the modern state and the rapid increase in population, King Hussein does not see people as often as he used to do in the past. Nevertheless, the country's record of human rights has progressively improved. Government, Parliament and the judiciary — all institutions that were built and strengthened by the King himself — have each assumed its responsibility in this regard.

Many countries, especially the most advanced ones, pride themselves on being nations of laws. As a jurist (I can appreciate the worthiness and validity of the rule of law. But I also know that the strict application of the law can be cold blooded and counter effective. Without humanising the application of laws, equity and justice can be frustrated. We have seen how the crude enforcement of laws without compassion in many developed countries can fail the cause of justice. King Hussein with his repeated interventions on behalf of aggrieved people has had the combined effect of acting as ombudsman of the country as well as humaniser of the implementation process of national legislations.



The evil at the heart of Nigeria

NIGERIA CONSISTS of 300 different peoples who were put together by the British. Although the country is a federation, ever since the military came into power its people have tried to turn this federation into a unitary system. Under this system, the major ethnic groups have cheated the smaller groups because 94 per cent of the GNP of Nigeria is oil, and the oil lies pre-eminently in the Niger delta which is inhabited by the small groups. Ogoni country produces oil and has produced oil since 1958, but the Ogoni people have nothing to show for it.

I want justice for the Ogoni people. I want self-determination for the Ogoni people. I want autonomy for the Ogoni people. This means that Ogoni political affairs will be run by Ogoni people. Ogoni economic resources will be used for the development of the Ogoni people. The Ogoni people will pay whatever they have to the federal government. They have responsibilities to keep the federation going.

Over the past 33 years, the Ogoni country has been completely destroyed the search for oil. If they have their own government, they will be able to settle those laws and regulations that will control the ramming oil companies. Oil blow-outs, spillages, oil slick and general pollution accompany the search for oil.

In most cases the oil companies have an obligation to ensure that these things do not happen. Unfortunately, they have not done these things in Nigeria. Oil companies have flared gas in Nigeria for the past 33 years causing acid rain. This is an area of very heavy rainfall. Acid rain then gets back into the soil, and what used to be the bread basket of the delta has now become totally infertile. This is the worst case of pollution I have seen in any part of the world where people have

Executed Nigerian writer Ken Saro-Wiwa's final interview epitomised his 20-year campaign

prospected for oil. In Britain, Shell produces oil, but you look at the adverts — they are talking of keeping the valleys neat and clean so that human beings will not know that anything is going on there. In Ogoni, Shell pipelines are there for everyone to see. Because the government in Nigeria is colonial, as far as the ethnic minorities such as the Ogoni are concerned, the interests of Shell and of those who are running Nigeria at this time, mix. I accuse Shell of racism because they are doing in Ogoni what they dare not do in Europe or America, where they also prospect for oil.

I am trying to mobilise opinion, particularly in the West, among shareholders of Shell, among the governments of Europe, of Britain, of Germany of France, of Italy — all those who prospect for oil, whose companies prospect for oil in Nigeria, to realise that they are ruining the environment, and dehumanising the people. I believe that if the people knew what has been happening, they would do something about it and stop this robbery and murder that is going on in broad daylight at the end of the 20th century.

All the oil that is produced in Nigeria is bought by America and the West and Japan. If they insisted, "Look, we are not going to buy this oil unless you ensure that the environment is protected, unless you ensure that rents and royalties are paid to the landowners — to the owners of the oil," it would be a different story altogether.

The profits from oil come to Britain because they sell the equipment. It is their technology that is keeping Nigerian oil going. It is, in fact, Western credit that is keeping Nigeria alive, so they have a moral responsibility to intervene in this situation. I have asked publicly that Nigeria be expelled from the United Nations because of its oppressive ways, because it has oppressed just too many Nigerians. The military governments of Nigeria have sat on other Nigerians in a way that is just as evil and as bad as what was done in South Africa.

In this country writers write to entertain, they raise questions of individual existence — you know the angst of the individual — but for a Nigerian writer in my position you can't go into that. Literature has to be combative. You cannot have art for art's sake. This art must do something to transform the lives of a community, of a nation. And for that reason, literature has a different purpose altogether in that sort of society, completely different from here. And, you know, a writer doesn't earn money in Nigeria because although you have 100 million people, most of them cannot read and write here, so literature has a different purpose. So here I am — I have written 22 books, I have produced 150 episodes of one television programme, which everyone enjoys, but I am poor. It is of no interest to me. What is of interest to me is that my art should be able to alter the lives of a large number of people, of a whole community, of the entire country.

try, so that my literature be to be entirely different. The stories that I tell must have a different sort of purpose from the artist in the Western world and it is not now an ego trip, you know, it is politics, it is economics, it's everything, you know, and art, in that instance becomes so meaningful both to the artist and to the consumers of that art, because you do not just depend on them to read your books, you even have to live their life that they can emulate. The artist in that society has a different role and, to my mind, a much more worthy role than the artist in the West.

When you are asking for the rights of the people, you cannot begin to wonder whether you are going to be killed or sent to jail or whatever. Right is right and it must be fought for. I have been at it for 20 years, and at this age, at this point in my life there's really nothing to fear. I think we have seen a lot of dictators collapse in the past and these ones are going to collapse as well.

I believe that the British government, the American government, the governments of the EC — all those who buy Nigerian oil — including the Japanese, and others, are encouraging genocide in Ogoni. I think that the entire international community should come forward to disavow this process of genocide. The U.N. views genocide as very serious crime. The fact that the ethnic majority in Nigeria colludes in genocide does not excuse it. I appeal to the entire international community to come to the help of Ogoni now, because if nothing is done, the Ogoni people are going to be extinct in no more than 10 years.

These are extracts from an interview with Ken Saro-Wiwa, the last conducted before he was executed. They are reprinted from the Independent.

Spanish democracy strong despite scandals

By Julia Hayley Renter

MADRID — Only 20 years ago Spain's opposition members were routinely arrested and jailed, communists were hounded into exile and the press and television were carefully watched and controlled.

When dictator general Francisco Franco died on Nov. 20, 1975 there was a tense silence followed by a period of confusion and finally a full-scale general election — the first since the 1936-39 civil war.

Now multi-party democracy looks as firmly installed as in any other Western European country, but political commentators still worry about its solidity.

A relentless series of scandals has beset the socialist government and prompted even Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez to question along the safety of the country's democratic institutions.

This reminded people of the failed coup attempt in 1981 which shook the still young democracy to its roots.

Diplomatic sources say Mr. Gonzalez's concern is not democracy itself but the reputation and credibility of King Juan Carlos on one hand and the civil guard on the other.

He is worried that the spiral of corruption and blackmail could smear the king and undermine the credibility of the man who filled the power vacuum left by Franco and ushered in democracy.

Politicians worry that allegations that the civil guard was involved in killing and torturing ETA guerrilla suspects in the 1980s could make the security force's presence there untenable.

Commentators have seized on all this to question Spain's political maturity and recall that dictatorship and isolation ended only 20 years ago and Spain lacks a long, stable history of democracy.

Since 1975 Spain has consolidated democracy, incorporated itself into Europe and ended its isolation, says Enrique Mujica, former socialist justice minister and lecturer in politics.

"The fear of authoritarian systems has disappeared, reactionary thought is minimal and the extreme right has practically vanished," he says as proof that democracy is solid.

Saying that democracy is at threat is pure Socialist Party scaremongering, says Gabriel Cisneros, member of parliament for the opposition conservative Popular Party and former member of the transition centre-democratic government UCD.

"But the series of scandals has caused widespread disaffection towards politicians as a whole," he told Reuters. "It could undermine democracy or diminish people's desire to participate."

"I'm convinced democracy is firmly rooted... but it already was (with the first elections) in 1977," he added.

Major social and economic changes had taken place in the 1960s with rapid industrialisation and growing civil liberties.

"In 1975 the only archaic element was the political system," said Cisneros, one of seven people involved in drafting the new democratic constitution after Franco's death.

Veteran journalists recall the last years of the dictatorship when Franco had relaxed his grip to some extent but when distributing anti-government propaganda was still punishable with 50 years in jail.

"The press had a carefully controlled freedom in the final years of Franco... Now it has practically absolute freedom," said Joaquin Prieto of the daily El Pais.

The press now appears largely to disregard Spain's libel laws and politicians feel free to insult each other publicly in terms which in other countries would bring instant lawsuits.

Even in the first months of democracy the editor of El Pais, which started life in 1976, was tried for publishing an article on contraceptives.

Now condoms are advertised on bus stops and pornography spills from newspaper kiosks.

Individual freedom, as evidenced by Spaniards' cheerful disrespect for traffic rules or noise limits and the authorities in general looks here to stay.

What the authorities still have to curb is corruption and particularly corruption in high places.

"Corruption is a danger to the prestige of the political class... but democracy is safely entrenched," Mr. Prieto said. "People participate, voter turnout is high and very few people think there's any alternative to democracy."

LETTERS

Subscribers need access to modern TCC services

To the Editor:

I RECENTLY read in the Jordan Times about the signing, by the Telecommunication Corporation (TCC), of a contract which will bring state of the art digital switching telephone exchanges to Jordan. I have also read, that there will be a modern all digital transmission system linking these switches together. The installation of an integrated digital telephone network in Jordan will bring the TCC system up to world class standards capable of offering to TCC subscribers the very latest telephone services, such as ISDN connections, allowing the speedy transfer of data (vital for modern business) as well as crystal clear speech connections.

In conversations around Amman these days many business people are rather concerned that the full potential of this new digital telephone system will not be realised unless the TCC offers ISDN connections to subscribers.

Is it the intent of the TCC, after all of this investment, to deny its subscribers access to these modern types of services and offer only POTS (Plain Old Telephone Service)? I, for one, fail to believe that the TCC is so short sighted that it will deny its subscribers, the local business community and the Jordanian economy, the chance to benefit from this substantial TCC investment in modern digital telephone equipment by not providing ISDN connections after the new system is installed.

Dennis E. Wright, Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Jordan committed to democracy

(Continued from page 1)

where an equilibrium is maintained between the Jordanian's right as an individual and his/her duty as a citizen.

The basic principles of administrative reform, the resumption of parliamentary life, the enhancement of dialogue between officials and citizens through responsible journalism, the rectification of the status of professional associations and an end to attempts aimed at politicising religion were the priorities on the prime minister's agenda and are still the cornerstones of Jordan's internal policy, the foreign minister stressed.

The representative of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Hubert Dobers, stressed that Jordan's democracy is on the right track but that the role of opposition and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) should not be discouraged.

"There should be no doubt that Jordan is capable on its own of developing democracy and imposing the rule of law. And there should be no doubt that an NGO like Al Urdun Al Jadid Research Centre, is capable on its own of assuming the role of a watchdog," Mr. Duhers said.

"There is no law-free space for acts of government in a system that follows the rule of law," he continued. "It would be as well naive to believe that democracy that is determined by the rule of the

majority, could be realised without guaranteeing a minimum of rights and their strict application to the minority who is in the opposition."

In his opening speech earlier in the seminar, Mr. Kabariit said: "In Jordan, we have — with the help of God — laid the foundations for a brighter future. At all levels, and in all fields. We have begun building our destiny together. The democratic avenue is the one we have chosen to help us fulfill our dreams, and accordingly we preach democracy, practice it, and protect it."

"Our hope is to create a tomorrow that will bring future generations the peace of mind that past generations so sorely missed."

The three-day seminar, which will host speakers from France, Germany, Cairo, Palestine and Jordan, will mainly tackle the judiciary authority in Jordan, separations between the three authorities and their role in promoting and enhancing democracy.

The rule of a constitutional court in protecting democracy and the importance of the role of opposition in Parliament and the independence of the judiciary are the main issues to be discussed over the coming two days. Senior officials, parliamentarians, politicians and human rights activists are expected to take part in the debate that will follow the presentation of each working paper.

Jordan condemns

(Continued from page 1)

of terrorism of any source.

Mr. Kabariit voiced Jordan's denunciation of the criminal act against the Egyptian embassy and reiterated

Blast destroys Egyptian embassy

(Continued from page 1)

way through the gate and set off a high explosive device in a pickup van," Mr. Ali said on Jordanian television.

Pakistan has come under pressure from Arab governments in the past over the activities of Arab terrorist groups on its soil, mostly leftover veterans of the 1979-89 anti-Soviet Afghan war.

Two years ago, the United States came close to bracketing Pakistan with Iran, Libya and Sudan on its list of states supporting international terrorism.

The blast was seen as a serious embarrassment to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's government, which is trying to project an image of a tolerant and democratic Islamic country, backing the fight against international terrorism.

The official Associated Press of Pakistan said Ms. Bhutto directed officials to arrange an alternate building for the Egyptian embassy. The Pakistani government has also offered to rebuild the chancery, it added.

Meanwhile, APP quoting Interior Minister Naseerullah Babar said the Islamabad police had found parts of a vehicle used in the bombing, including those bearing the engine and chassis number.

After an emergency cabinet meeting in Cairo, Prime Minister Atef Sedqi vowed, "we are going to act with firmness against terrorism."

And Foreign Minister Amr Musa announced, "we are in the process of taking measures to guarantee security around Egyptian embassies abroad."

A five-member team of anti-terrorism experts left Cairo for Islamabad alongside a 10-member foreign ministry delegation "to help Pakistani authorities in their investigations," a security official said.

In Washington, President Bill Clinton condemned the

embassy and reiterated Jordan's firm stand against all acts of terrorism and its support for and solidarity with Egypt in the quest for stability and continued security.

King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, meanwhile, telephoned President Mubarak to condemn "this dangerous criminal attack which is contrary to Islamic law," the Saudi Press Agency reported.

The king, whose capital was itself the scene of a bomb blast last Monday against U.S. military offices that killed six people, also offered his condolences to the families of the victims.

Kuwait's emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, sent a message of sympathy to Mr. Mubarak as his cabinet expressed its "profound condemnation of this criminal act which cost innocent lives."

"Kuwait reaffirms its rejection of violence and terrorism in all its forms," ministers said after their weekly cabinet meeting.

France voiced shock at the bombing and said the attack must strengthen determination of "civilised nations" to fight terrorism.

"We were deeply shocked by the attack which devastated the Egyptian embassy in Pakistan... such a short time after the Riyadh attack," a French foreign ministry statement said.

"This attack must strengthen the determination of civilised nations to fight terrorism wherever it comes from, and whoever is responsible," it said.

Bosnia deadline set for today

(Continued from page 1)

corridor.

The Bosnian Justice Minister Mate Tadic, a Bosnian Croat, resigned Saturday to protest the proposal.

His move came after Mr. Zubak, also a Croat, threatened to resign Friday as head of Bosnia's Muslim-Croat Federation.

Mr. Zubak has twice said this week he will not sign the peace deal being prepared because he says it forces the Bosnian Croats to give up land in Posavina.

Eight Bosnian opposition parties Saturday, meanwhile, warned Mr. Izetbegovic the deal would confirm the division of Bosnia.

Stipe Mesic, a Croat who was the last president of the non-Yugoslavia before war broke out, told AFP Sunday he U.S.-led negotiations in Dayton were a "land deal being conducted on the back of the people and the Croatian parliament."

He added the deal "goes against Croatian interests."

Mr. Mesic, an opposition party, was referring to the "Bosnian deal" negotiated in Dayton in which the Bosnian Croats would be given current Croats and Muslim-held lands around the Posavina



Some of the Roman period carved stones excavated in the area of the church

Yajuz excavation reveals major Roman-Byzantine town

Text and photos by Rami G. Khouri
Special to the Jordan Times

NEARLY A century after it was first documented by European travellers, the ancient townsite at Yajuz, on the northern border of Amman, is being systematically unearthed by excavations being conducted by the Department of Antiquities, with the participation of faculty and students from the University of Jordan.

The site adds yet another major Roman and Byzantine period town to the registry of Jordanian antiquities — it also raises anew the vexing question of what can be done to preserve antiquities that are located on privately owned land and that could be threatened by a combination of private development plans and illicit robbing of artifacts.

The site of Yajuz occupies an entire hillside immediately east of the cemetery located about a kilometre north of the Sheikh-Zerga road (adjacent to several large, blue prefabricated bangers visible from the road and the cemetery). It was first mentioned by Condor in 1889, and again documented by Glueck in 1939, and in 1972 the American archaeologist H. Thompson excavated a Roman tomb at the site. In 1994, the owner of the land

was bulldozing the site when he stumbled across some large cut stones that were obviously from ancient structures. He notified the Department of Antiquities, which initiated excavations in 1994, and earlier this year excavations continued by a Department of Antiquities team headed by Emself Suleiman, with the participation of students from the University of Jordan supervised by Dr. Lutfi Khalil.

The excavations to date have uncovered a large Byzantine Church, a smaller chapel, and a building that appears to have been a grain milling facility. Sherds recovered from the site indicate major occupation in the Roman, Byzantine and early Islamic periods, with a few sherds from other periods probably representing transient human use of the site rather than a settlement.

The large basilical church excavated by the Department of Antiquities measures 28 X 17 metres. It comprises a central hall with two side aisles ending in apses at the east, and several adjacent rooms. The entire church of the floor was covered in mosaics, except for some side rooms that had stone slab flooring. The mosaics all seem to have had geometric designs, with no figures of people or animals evident to date. The mosaic floor was repaired in an

quity, as two distinct levels of mosaics can be identified.

The church was entered through a side door that gave onto a small courtyard, in the centre of which was a cistern that held up to 30 cubic metres of water that was collected on the roof and conveyed into the cistern through stone and plaster channels. The walls of the church were plastered and painted, as evidenced by some remains of red paint, and long benches ran along the base of the main walls. In the north-west corner of the church is an underground cave/room that was entered through steps and an arched doorway, and that was used as a storage cellar of some sort, according to Mr. Suleiman.

Other rooms had remains of water basins that were carved out of the natural bedrock or were freestanding, with associated water channels. These structures may have had something to do with draining away water that leaked into the building. Immediately south of the church are some domestic areas from the late Byzantine period.

The church dates from the late Byzantine period (mid-5th to mid-7th century), but cannot yet be more precisely dated due to the lack of inscriptions or coins. No Islamic pottery or coins were found, suggesting the building had gone

out of use after the mid-7th century. Dr. Khalil thinks that the townsite may have moved slightly to the southeast in the early Islamic period, in the vicinity of the existing Khirbet El Kom site which was tested in the 1970s by Hank Thompson and revealed Ottoman habitation.

The smaller chapel uphill and north of the church also shows two distinct phases of use, evidence by blocked doorways, two architectural levels in the apse area, and benches that were added along the interior of the main walls in the second period of use. The benches along the interior of the apse are relatively rare in Jordan, notes Dr. Khalil. Rooms north of the chapel probably date from the second phase of use. The main entrance to the chapel may have changed at that time, to judge by a blocked doorway in the north wall.

West of the chapel is a room with four internal arches and an eight-line Greek inscription without a date. The chapel dates from the late Umayyad period in the mid-8th century, based on the excavated pottery. The floor was made of coloured geometric-pattern mosaics, which has been restored thanks to the assistance of the students at the Madaba Mosaics School. The roof was built of a combination of ceramic tiles and long stone slabs supported by many arches.

The chapel had a 15-centimetre-thick layer of ash, perhaps from the building's destruction during the 747 AD earthquake.

Many re-used carved stones from the Roman period in the chapel and the basilical church, along with much Roman pottery, confirm the existence of a Roman period town at Yajuz, though no distinctly Roman structures have been excavated yet. They probably will be found in other parts of the sprawling hillside, which covers more than 200 dunums of land.

Some of the carved Roman stones, such as rosettes, capitals and altars, suggest the presence of a temple. An important find at Yajuz is a series of Roman era capitals with carved animals that look like medieval European gargoyles; the animals were rubbed out in the Byzantine period and replaced with simple crosses, perhaps during a period of Christian iconoclasm. A frieze that once ran across the top of the capitals was adorned with animals, fruits and other depictions of living things. One fine, large stone at the site that sports a carved eagle and altar was found outside the church area, though most of the reused Roman stonework comes from the church itself.

An excavated area along the west side of the site

revealed deep stratigraphy, comprising several milling facilities, perhaps an industrial area with adjacent living quarters for the millers. One large grinding stone found in situ can still be turned by two men pushing on a wooden pole inserted through the circular stone. Many complete pottery objects were found in this area, and some coins that are not easily readable, but whose shape suggests that they date from the Byzantine period. Much burned material was also uncovered, perhaps burnt grain that was stored there. This industrial structure showed two types of construction — nicely dressed stones on the exterior walls, and rough stones in the internal walls. West of the main structure is a series of rooms with arches and vaults; most pottery there dated from the Byzantine period, though some painted sherds could be late Byzantine or early Umayyad.

The discovery of this major town between Amman (Philadelphia) and Jerash (Gerasa) raises the question of its identification, which is still being studied. Two Roman milestones were recently discovered in the area and saved by the Department of Antiquities, one of them dating from the 2nd century AD, suggesting that the town was located along a major Roman road. The Yajuz excavations will continue next year.

Assassins usually miss the larger target

By Elaine Sciolino

FROM THE moment Yigal Amir fired his pistol, killing Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, the question in the minds of many was what impact the Israeli leader's death would have on Middle East peace.

Mr. Amir's own words could not have been clearer: He had said months earlier that he was determined to stop Israel from turning over control of much of the West Bank, what he called Israel's "most holy land," to the Palestinians. What is not clear — at least not yet — is whether he will succeed in stopping, or even slowing down, implementation of the peace agreement between Israelis and Palestinians.

But if Mr. Amir had more of a sense of history, he would know that assassination for political ends works only seldom — and hardly ever in the way the assassin intended. The individual murderer simply does not have the kind of force on the historical stage that the leader of a popular revolution or the commander of any army might. And the heinousness of the crime itself often discredits the assassin's cause.

"Great political changes do not take place as a result of specific, personal interventions," said Franklin Ford, the Harvard University historian who investigated assassination throughout history in his book, "Political Murder." "Whatever happens — aside from self-assertion — the outcome is not going to be what the assassin had in mind. The historical record seems to me pretty impressive that people who killed other people for political advantage were almost always disappointed."

Not every attempt at assassination is political. Acts of violence can spring from personal passions that have no connection to the specific target or larger political events. Giuseppe Zangara, a 32-year-old Italian immigrant bricklayer, espoused no real cause, except perhaps personal outrage against capitalism, when he opened fire on President-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt at a political rally in Miami in 1933. In confessing, he explained that his father, the president-elect and rich people in general were to blame for the constant stomach pain he had endured since childhood.

One can argue that the political assassin achieves the most fundamental goal simply by removing his or her target from political life. Sirhan Sirhan, whose family had to flee Jerusalem in poverty after Israeli independence, deeply hated Robert Kennedy for his allegiance to Israel. "His intent was to deny the presidency to a powerful pro-Israeli politician on the brink of the nomination," wrote James W. Clarke, professor of political science at the University of Arizona in his 1982 book "American Assassins." But Mr. Kennedy's death did nothing to halt the deepening of U.S.-Israeli ties; Richard Nixon opened up the Pentagon's storehouses and airlifted American military equipment to Israel in the 1973 war.

In the vast majority of political assassinations, the murderer's goal is not achieved. Julius Caesar's killers (Brutus, too) sought to destroy an ambitious general — and helped destroy the Roman republic. Henry II ordered the death of Archbishop Thomas a Becket to end his problems with the clergy, but was forced instead to do penance at Becket's tomb on the Pope's orders.

John Wilkes Booth was driven by his love of the Confederacy and his hatred

of Abraham Lincoln to kill the president. But by the time he acted, the South had lost the war. He couldn't fathom why he wasn't lionised. "A country that groaned beneath this tyranny, and prayed for this end, and yet now behold the cold hand they extend me," he wrote in his diary before his capture.

Lincoln's death only made it worse for white Confederates. Without him, Northern Republicans brought vengeance down on the South with a ferocity that was alien to Lincoln, putting it under military rule. But in the end, John Wilkes Booth may have gotten his revenge, in the ultimate failure of Reconstruction.

Not every assassin's motive is clear, not every outcome easy to interpret. James Earl Ray, the petty thief who killed Martin Luther King Jr., was probably motivated more by money than by obsessive racist rage when he shot and killed the civil rights leader in 1968. Just as Dr. King's death helped derail the reconciliatory tone of the civil rights movement, it also spurred a sense of outrage that lent credibility to more militant black movements.

A side effect: World War I

One safe conclusion is that assassinations often have unintended consequences. The Bosnian Serb Gavrilo Princip's assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the heir to the Austrian throne, in Sarajevo in 1914 may have helped end Austrian domination of the Balkans, but only at the cost of setting off World War I and then tying the Serbs' future for 75 years to the same Croats and Bosnian Muslims they fight today. Likewise, the assassination of John F. Kennedy gave Lyndon Johnson much more room to push through an aggressive domestic social agenda than Mr. Kennedy may ever have had.

There is at least one case in which the would-be assassin achieved his political goal — but only because his victim did not die. France's emperor Napoleon III was just grazed by a fragment of a grenade thrown at his carriage in Paris in 1856 by Felice Orsini, an ardent Italian nationalist. But the Emperor felt so guilty that he had abandoned the pro-Italian sentiments of his youth that he led France into battle

against Austria the next year, a war that resulted in the creation of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861.

So what effect will Mr. Amir's action have on the course of Middle East history? Certainly he is not the first to try to prevent Israel from making peace with Arabs.

King Abdullah of Jordan was assassinated while entering Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem in 1951 by a Palestinian who feared (King) Abdullah might make peace with the new state of Israel. His death may have slowed but did not destroy the process.

President Anwar Al Sadat of Egypt was gunned down while reviewing a military parade in Cairo in 1981 by anti-American Islamists after he made peace with Israel at Camp David. But Egypt is still at peace with Israel, is still the recipient of more than \$2 billion a year in American aid, is still autocratic — and still largely excludes the Islamic opposition from power.

At Mr. Rabin's funeral recently, both King Hussein and Mr. Mubarak pledged to continue the quest for peace.

The New York Times.

Economy

Omani leader calls for stronger private sector

MUSCAT (AFP) — Oman's Sultan Qaboos Saturday urged the private sector to play a greater role in domestic development by increasing investment to repair economic damage caused by weak oil prices.

In a national day address broadcast live on state-run television, Sultan Qaboos said economic reforms launched by the Gulf country a few years ago had been successful but that oil remained the main source of income.

"We have no choice but to develop the domestic economy so oil will be left with a limited share in the national income as it is a depletable source on which we should not depend for our development," he said.

"So we call on the citizens to invest in their country and set up businesses to develop the industrial, farming and tourism sectors. The private sector should develop its instruments and methods and the government should interact with the private sector and make sure bureaucracy and complicated administrative measures will not affect its performance," he added.

Oman launched reforms four years ago to ease reliance on 'volatile oil earnings, which provide more than 80 per cent of its re-

venues. The reforms include privatisations, improvement of investment laws, incentives for industrial projects and opening the stock market to foreigners.

So far, five state-run institutions have been sold off to the public while the government is planning to set up multi-billion-dollar projects in partnership with the local and foreign private sector.

"We need a comprehensive strategy to achieve economic diversification and work seriously to better exploit available resources," Sultan Qaboos said. "We should also work to turn Oman into a good oasis that will attract useful foreign investments, which are needed for real development."

Oman, which is not an OPEC member, produces more than 800,000 barrels per day of oil, which brings in early \$4 billion a year. Income is set to surge when an \$8 billion gas liquefaction plant starts producing nearly six million tonnes by the year 2000.

As in other Gulf oil producers, low crude prices have slowed down Oman's economy and turned a financial surplus into a deficit, which was projected at around \$800 million in 1995.

OSAKA, Japan (R) — The Asia-Pacific free trade summit ended on a ringing note and with new credibility on Sunday when China upstaged its APEC partners by announcing the biggest liberalisation of its markets in 16 years.

After days of pious vows by APEC leaders to turn their region into a free trade zone, China put its money where its mouth is with plans to cut tariffs on imports to its market of 1.2 billion people by 30 per cent from 1996.

Other nations, most with far freer markets than China, were reduced mainly to announcing steps they had already taken.

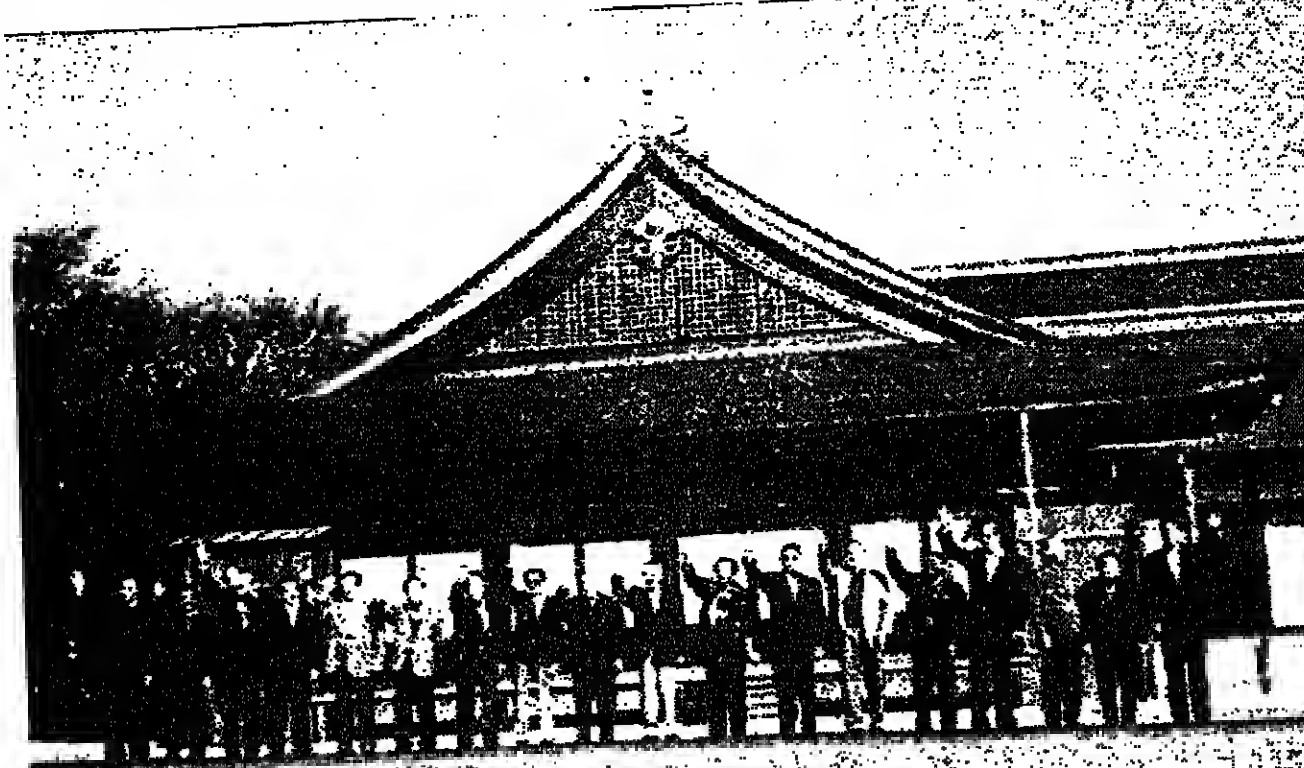
U.S. Vice-President Al Gore called the Chinese package "positive" and other leaders applauded it.

For Beijing, often a target of criticism on trade policies, the Osaka summit was a coming-out party where it took a major new step towards joining the world's free traders.

The tariff cuts and other measures were the biggest opening of China's markets since the communist nation started capitalist-style reforms in 1979.

The joint declaration at the end of the annual summit of leaders of the 18-member Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum said the group had entered the "action phase" in bringing down trade barriers in the world's fastest growing re-

APEC forum enters 'action phase'



APEC leaders wave Sunday in a photo session in front of the traditional Japanese-style Osaka Geihinkan (guest house) prior to a meeting in the Osaka Castle compound (Reuters photo)

gion.

APEC leaders held their first summit in 1993 in Seattle, where they adopted a broad vision of regional free trade. Last year at Bogor, Indonesia, they set target dates of 2010 for rich nations and 2020 for poorer nations.

Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama, flanked by other casually-dressed leaders on a red carpet in the grounds of Osaka castle, proudly read the declaration in the crisp autumn air.

APEC, founded in 1989, groups Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and the United States.

"We will implement the action agenda with unwavering resolve," Mr. Murayama said. He made it clear APEC

had no intention of keeping the benefits of freer trade in the region to APEC members alone. "Those measures announced by APEC members will apply to non-APEC economies," he said.

The action agenda, worked out last week by trade and foreign ministers, is a blueprint for APEC's way forward.

The agenda identified nine principles as the basis of liberalisation and 100 steps to take in 15 trade areas by the time of the next summit in the Philippines.

The document used linguistic acrobatics to smooth over disputes including a row over how to treat agriculture and other politically touchy trade sectors.

The leaders of a region where eight major languages and many dialects are spoken, met in a reputedly haunted castle to exorcise the demons of past trade barriers in an area that accounts for nearly half of world trade.

Osaka castle is supposedly stalked by ghosts of Samurai warriors killed in a siege in 1614 and 1615, and of soldiers hit by U.S. bombs in 1945 when the 400-year-old castle was destroyed for the fourth time. The Osaka meeting had also been haunted by fears of failure.

Deep differences among the diverse members — Japan and the United States are among the world's richest nations, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia are among Asia's poorest — nearly caused the APEC process to unravel in the run-up to the summit.

President Bill Clinton's absence due to the U.S. budget crisis also threw a

damper on the occasion. But the difficulties — and past ghosts — were overcome.

"When developing countries become prosperous with billions of people lifted from poverty, it will provide enormous opportunities for trade and investment for all countries," said Chinese President Jiang Zemin in his speech to the summit.

Chinese officials said the cuts they announced affected more than 4,000 items on a list of about 6,000 imported goods and would cut the average tariff to about 24.25 per cent from a current 35 per cent.

APEC leaders also voiced concern that volatile currency

movements remained a threat to stable trade and economic development.

The leaders discussed (the fact) that in several cases volatile currency fluctuations have a negative impact on stable development in trade and economies in the region," a senior Japanese foreign ministry official told reporters.

Some leaders tried to look for ways to stabilise currencies, but others said that currency issues should be determined by the market itself," the Japanese official said.

Persistent fears about another rapid rally in the yen continued to haunt the leaders, whose trade balances and economies were hit hard by a dollar-free fall against the yen earlier this year.

The dollar nosedived to a record low of 79.75 yen in April before recovering gradually to well above 100 yen thanks to a global intervention effort initiated by Japan.

Some leaders urged Japan to step up efforts to boost imports to reduce its vast trade surplus. A strong yen also makes it difficult for Asian countries to repay yen-denominated loans.

Earlier Sunday, Malaysia complained in a ministerial meeting with Japan that the yen's strength had been a major factor behind its huge trade deficits as it boosted prices of imports from Japan.

Japan's Foreign Minister Yohel Kono said Tokyo had already cut interest rates on new yen credits to ease the pain caused by the strong yen, but that the yen's strength itself had both merits and demerits.

In April APEC finance ministers meeting in Bali, Indonesia, called for a determined effort for foreign exchange stability.

Bid by donors to solve IDA funding crisis without U.S.

LUXEMBOURG (AFP) — Donor countries agreed at the weekend to seek an interim solution without the United States to head off a funding crisis threatening the International Development Association (IDA), a vital source of finance for the world's poorest.

Finance officials from 32 donor capitals said they reached a consensus on the urgent need to keep up the flow of IDA credits to the 78 most needy nations, from Bangladesh to Benin and Bolivia, despite expected sharp cuts in U.S. foreign aid.

"We cannot afford to wait for the U.S. to sort out its budget problem," one official said after a two-day donors' meeting here.

"We agree it would be unrealistic, if not illusory, to hope that the U.S. will be able to pledge new money for IDA anytime soon," and "I

think we're ready to assume our responsibilities," he added.

"This really is a crisis," Johannes Linn, World Bank vice president for financial policy, told AFP before leaving for Bonn on Sunday to report to the bank's president, James Wolfensohn, due to meet German leaders after a visit to Ukraine.

IDA is the "soft loan" window of the World Bank family. It grants interest-free long-term credits — over 35 to 40 years — to countries with an annual per capita revenue of less than \$835 as of 1994.

Nearly half its annual lending of some \$6 billion goes to Sub-Saharan Africa, but poorer Asian countries are also major IDA borrowers.

Mr. Linn said the "good news" from the Luxembourg talks was that the donor

countries "have shown willingness to consider some exceptional arrangement" to keep IDA funded.

"We have to reach agreement very soon if we are to avoid starting to cut back on IDA lending from the first half of 1996," he added.

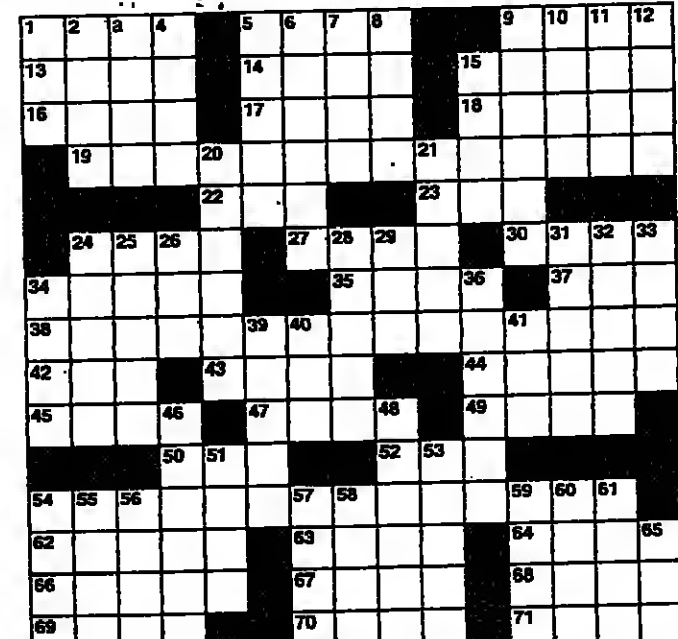
Echoing remarks by Treasury Director Yves Mersch of host country Luxembourg, Mr. Linn said he too considered there was a possibility of striking a final agreement in the first quarter of 1996.

But he cautioned there was "no guarantee" they would succeed.

Participants in the talks here said the real issue facing them was that of "burden-sharing" among donors — as one of them put it, "whether or not they will be ready to contribute fully when the wealthiest among them, the U.S., does not and is in arrears."

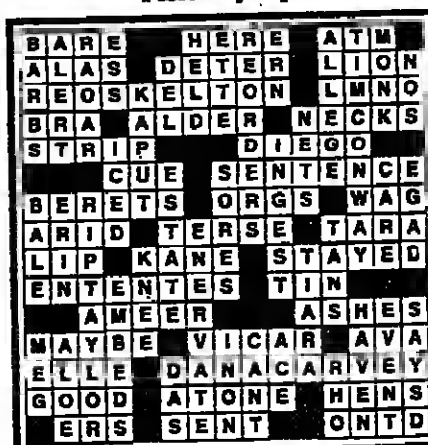
THE Daily Crossword by Frances Burton

- ACROSS
- 1 Criticize harshly
 - 5 Playwright Hart
 - 9 "Two Years Before the..."
 - 13 Dover's fish
 - 14 Encore
 - 15 Noodles
 - 16 Mix a salad
 - 17 Italian money
 - 18 Go in
 - 19 Celebrated person
 - 22 Greek god
 - 23 Goo!
 - 24 — avis
 - 27 Creature with flippers
 - 30 Rhyme scheme
 - 34 Playwright
 - 35 Neat
 - 35 Vicinity
 - 37 Legal matter
 - 38 Fiat
 - 42 Double curve
 - 43 Squirrel away
 - 44 Full of hazards
 - 45 Cry
 - 47 Take time out

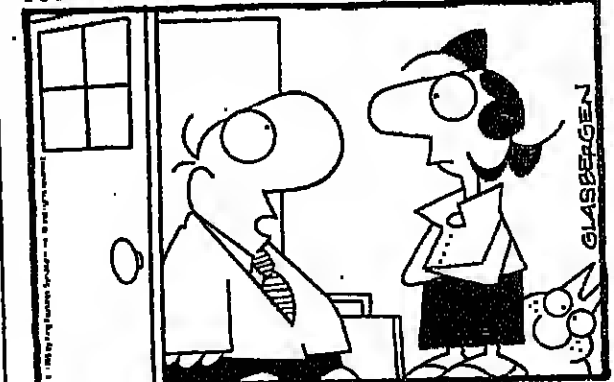


- DOWN
- 1 Fast plane
 - 2 Boogie
 - 3 Too
 - 4 Plateau
 - 5 Mediterranean island
 - 6 Liver and —
 - 7 Peon
 - 8 Hit, as a fly
 - 9 Hindu chanted word
 - 10 Regarding
 - 11 Do a slow burn
 - 12 Mountain lake
 - 15 Squint at
 - 20 Punishes, in a way
 - 21 — of Troy
 - 24 Wash cycle
 - 25 Tickle
 - 26 Legendary bird
 - 28 Abates
 - 29 Altar in the sky
 - 31 Block of baked clay
 - 32 Ms. Sharp of "Vanity Fair"
 - 33 Pale
 - 34 Distort
 - 36 Without direction
 - 39 Insect stage
 - 40 Night before
 - 41 Triumphed
 - 46 Herbage
 - 48 Scratch pad
 - 51 — of March
 - 53 Red herrings
 - 54 Mark
 - 55 It, city
 - 56 Land of leprechauns
 - 57 Salt
 - 58 Calamitous
 - 59 Ripped
 - 60 Singer Adams
 - 61 Fragrant flower
 - 65 Danger color

Yesterday's puzzle solved:



THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



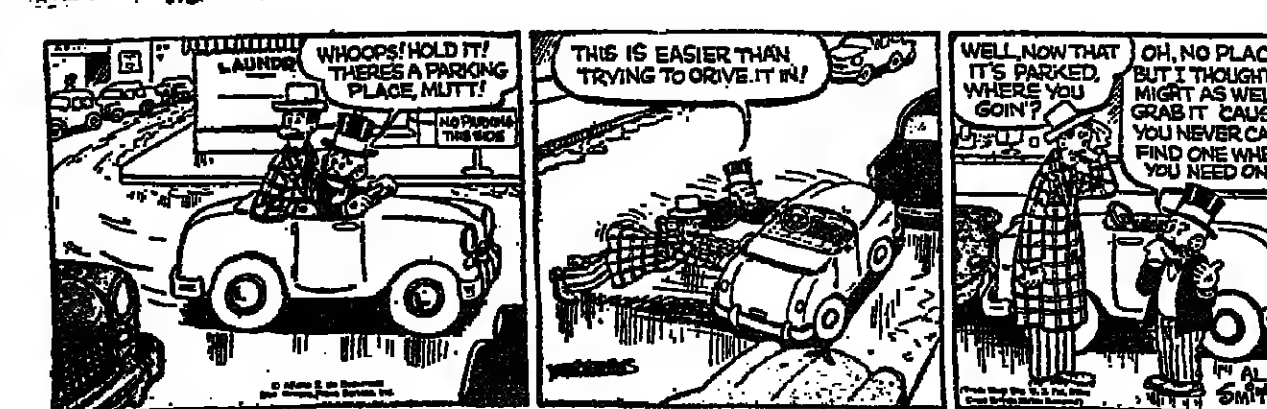
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1995

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Postpone payment on some account at this time until you are absolutely sure of the amount owed and be more business.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You will have to extend your talks with an associate, today before agreement can be reached, but use patient waiting tactics.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Keep busy with career activities, even if you find payment is not forthcoming just yet and you may have to wait a little longer.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Get those personal details handled before you go out today and this evening for the recreations which are uppermost on your mind.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You hesitate to present a plan today to family and this is not the propitious time to do so, thus, follow your hunches.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) A congenial associate postpones answering some letter today, but stop worrying since it may take a little longer to get it.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) A bigwig may give you the suggestions about money or real property today, but they would not fit your situation for what you desire.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You had better study new ideas or plans better before you carry through with them. Listen to your hunches about a new friend.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Get rid of that depressing situation today, later tonight and become enthusiastic for new practical interests which can be profitable.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Get your head together with an old fellow associate today and a group buddy and plan the future, better. Consult an expert about a new project.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Be watchful of your reputation today since some innocent action could easily be misinterpreted. Handle career activities efficiently for your success.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Try a new kind of entertainment today with a new friend who knows the ropes. The look to old friends for future progress.

Birthstone of November: Topaz — Tiger's Eye

Jordan embarks on airport modernisation plan

By Suleiman Al Khalidi
Reuters

AMMAN — Jordan has embarked on an \$85 million airport modernisation plan to cope with a forecast rise in regional tourism in the wake of Middle East peace, an official said Sunday.

"As a result of the increase in air traffic in our region, we have put in place plans to cope with these developments by modernising our civil airport," Ahmad Jweiber, director general of Jordan's Civil Aviation Authority, told Reuters.

There has been a surge in tourism since Jordan and Israel signed a peace treaty in 1994 and future comprehensive peace in the region is expected to fuel a visitors' boom.

Mr. Jweiber said the 1995-1998 scheme does not include multi-million dollar plans to expand an airport in the southern Red Sea city of Aqaba to let Israel use it to ease traffic heading to its nearby congested airport in Eilat.

"Our plans take into consideration what the region is witnessing as a result of the peace process," Mr. Jweiber added.

Air traffic to Jordan rose by 6.5 per cent in the first eight months of 1995, compared to the same period last year, with 12,825 plane arrivals and departures against 12,044 in 1994.

A total of 1,187,260 passengers arrived and departed during the same period in 1995, compared to 1,113,138 in 1994.

The modernisation plan covers Jordan's three airports — the main Queen Alia International Airport, a 30-minute drive from the Jordanian capital, and two smaller ones, in Amman and Aqaba.

A number of tenders have already been awarded to foreign companies to modernise passenger terminals. Mr. Jweiber said.

Holland's Philips electronics firm won a 425,000 dinar (\$601,282) contract to upgrade the public air traffic information system by the end of the year.

The French firm Sofreavia won a \$100 million (\$706,214) tender last month to supply, install and operate an aeronautical fixed telecommunications network. France is financing 70 per cent of the tender, to be completed in eight months.

The Amman Airport, which authorities hope to use for short-range flights later this year, is undergoing a JD 7 million (\$10 million) facelift.

But the bulk of the budget, JD 27 million (\$38 million), will be spent on modernising Aqaba airport, to enable it cope with an expected rise in regional tourism and future plans to upgrade it into a regional airport that will also serve Israel.

"The development plan has accorded Aqaba airport a special importance, especially since it will become a regional airport with high international specifications,"

Mr. Jweiber said.

U.S. Lockheed Martin Corp., which won a contract last month to study the feasibility of expanding Aqaba airport for joint use with Israel, would finish within six months.

Other infrastructure schemes include JD 1 million

(\$1.4 million) plan to re-align the northern runway at Queen Alia Airport in line with recommendations made by the Montreal-based International Civil Aviation Organisation.

A new meteorological system project worth \$30,000 dinars (\$748,587) was

awarded to the French company Sofreavia, with a completion target by year end, to assist flight plans.

Jordanian officials said an aviation accord with Israel to allow direct air links under a 1994 peace treaty will be signed soon after both countries worked out its details.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET			
LISTING BASED ON THE AMMAN STOCK EXCHANGE			
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179			
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 19/11/1995			
COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE
ARAB BANK P.C.	760	180,116	234.50
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	8129	18,320	4.430
HYDRO EAST INVESTMENT BANK	17250	19,000	1.140
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	1450	3485	2.400
THE MOUTON BANK	8500	24,444	4.270
JORDAN KHAJAT BANK	112	312	2.700
JORDAN GULF BANK	193577	217,886	3.100
WESTERN BANK	300	2650	3.320
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	2218	4148	3.500
REIT KHALIL SAVINGS INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	160	483	3.020
ARAB BANK FOR INVESTMENT	27450	28268	9.90
ARAB BANKING CORPORATION JORDAN	1000	5240	5.240
PRINCIPAL INVESTMENT BANK	6100	16,627	2.720
BANKS	244321	529875	INDEX NUMBER: 166.26
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR			CHANGE: -0.06%
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	22120	34775	1.592
NATIONAL FERTILIZER INDUSTRIES	2800	4505	1.600
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	30000	30000	1.000
JORDAN PRESS FOUNDATION / ALARA	700	7639	4.850
UNITED MORTGAGE BANK & CREDITORS HOTELS	4800	10362	2.150
JORDAN PRIVATE UNIVERSITY	100	133	1.330
UTION LAND DEVELOPMENT CORP.	1080	1063	0.980
SERVICES SECTOR	61488	88900	INDEX NUMBER: 123.57
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR			CHANGE: -0.26%
JORDAN TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	292	5840	20.000
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	9732	20301	3.370
THE ARAB POTASH	300	1440	4.800
JORDAN FERTILIZER REFINERY	650	8174	9.150
THE JORDAN MOISTURE MILLS	250	1850	7.400
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	3245	14023	4.300
JORDAN DAIRY	100	250	2.500
ARAB CHEMICALS & OIL INDUSTRIES	4300	51620	12.400
SPINNING & WEAVING	1000	1750	1.750
PARAZOL BANK DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	250	1664	6.650
ARAB ALUMINUM INDUSTRY	400	540	1.350
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	80883	52249	6.30
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	2100	3113	1.240
NATIONAL INDUSTRIES	1400	1400	1.000
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	2000	3210	1.600
JORDAN SULPHUR CHEMICALS	5300	6282	3.200
OVERSEAS MODERN INDUSTRIES	650	1945	2.970
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY CO.	500	1860	3.720
JORDAN NEW CABLE COMPANY	1910	2674	1.400
INTERNATIONAL TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	16550	21832	3.100
UNION CHEMICAL & FERTILIZERS LTD. JORDAN	14800	56788	1.920
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	163402	270416	INDEX NUMBER: 119.64
GRAND TOTAL	489111	849271	INDEX NUMBER: 143.50
			CHANGE: -0.47%
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET: 10432			
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET: 14638			

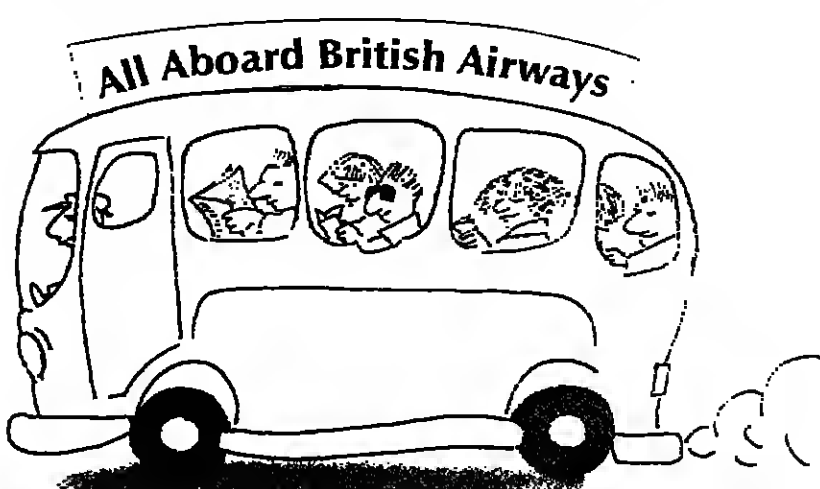
BUSINESS BRIEF BEAT

A review of news from the Arabic press

New share issues at AFM's primary market decline

NEW SHARE issues at the primary market of the Amman Financial Market retreated by 34.8 per cent as their total during the first nine months of this year amounted to JD 246.5 million compared to JD 378.2 million during the same period of last year. Newly-established companies accounted for most of the activity at the primary market having issued JD 194 million worth of shares, or 78.7 of the total new issues. Established companies issued a total of 52.4 million new shares, valued at JD 42.6 million, to finance

expansion plans and consolidate the capital base. The activity at the secondary market was slightly less as the trading volume during the first nine months of this year amounted to JD 3,123 million compared to JD 3,215.6 million during the same period of last year despite the rise in the book value of the total shares from registration of new companies and entry new shares. In 1994, the total value of issues at the primary market stood at a record JD 484.3 million, 60 per cent of the total issues since the AFM was established in 1978 (Al Ra'i).

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Financial Markets
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Cairo Amman BankForeign Exchange Market Summary
(November 13 - November 17, 1995)

AMMAN — The U.S. unit appreciated noticeably against the yen and sterling last week, while depreciating modestly against the mark. It ended the week 1.45 per cent higher against the sterling, 1.22 per cent higher against the yen, and 0.72 per cent lower against the mark.

The dollar appreciated against other major currencies Monday. Reports indicated that the announcement that the U.S. Treasury would issue more than \$107 billion in debt securities, partly to meet interest and principal payments due on Oct. 15, contributed to the dollar's rise, despite continued budget dispute. The dollar was also supported by the U.S. treasury secretary's comments, who indicated that the U.S. government might use its trust funds, with total assets of \$375 billion, to meet its obligations in the short-term.

The U.S. unit depreciated against other major currencies on Tuesday, however, as traders were pessimistic that the Congress and the White House would reach an agreement over reducing the budget deficit. Analysts indicated that the failure to reach an agreement forced the Clinton Administration to close non-essential operations and lay off 800,000 employees temporarily. The U.S. dollar also declined following the release of U.S. retail sales data, which showed a decline of 0.2 per cent in October.

The dollar continued its depreciation Wednesday. Reports indicated that the dollar lost ground during overseas trading hours, but managed to reconquer some of its losses on short covering later in New York. News that the U.S. administration was able to meet its debt obligations by tapping the Social Security Fund, lent support to the dollar. The dollar also benefited from the Federal Open Market Committee's decision to leave its monetary policy unchanged. It also benefited from the French franc's rise against the Deutschmark after the French government approved a programme that aims at restructuring its social security and welfare programmes.

The U.S. unit appreciated against the yen and sterling Thursday, while depreciating against the mark. The dollar rose on the back of U.S. bond and stock market rallies due to renewed optimism that the U.S. administration and the Congress will reach an agreement to resolve the budget deficit dispute. Reports indicated that the dollar also rose against the yen on news that the Japanese government is considering procedures to reorganise domestic capital flows abroad.

The dollar continued its appreciation against other major currencies at the end of the week. The dollar rose as sterling tumbled against the mark to breach a low of 2.17 marks. Reports indicated that comments by the Bank of England governor, who spoke favourably about the current policy of setting inflation targets, were interpreted by traders as a sign the British interest rates are heading lower. Sterling also came under pressure as traders feared that the upcoming British budget plan will include huge tax reductions.

The U.S. unit, thus, ended the week at 1.4073 marks, 102.15 yen and at \$1.5433 to sterling.

New York Closing Rates for Major Currencies Against the U.S. Dollar

Currency	Nov. 10, 1995	Nov. 17, 1995	Percent Change
Switzerland*	1.5600	1.5433	(1.05) %
Deutsche Mark	1.4175	1.4073	(0.72) %
British Pound	1.1396	1.1385	(0.10) %
French Franc	4.8833	4.8483	(0.71) %
Japanese Yen	100.90	102.15	(1.23) %

* 100 Yen = 100

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Nov. 10, 1995	Nov. 17, 1995	Percent Change
U.S. Dollar	0.7080	0.7100	0.28 %
Switzerland	1.0925	1.0980	0.50 %
Deutsche Mark	0.5029	0.5054	0.50 %
British Pound	0.6512	0.6523	0.17 %
French Franc	0.1458	0.1465	0.48 %
Japanese Yen*	0.0920	0.0955	3.80 %
Dutch Guilder	0.4493	0.4515	0.49 %
Swedish Krona	0.0444	0.0446	0.45 %
Italian Lira*	0.0444	0.0446	0.45 %
Belgian Franc*	0.0444	0.0446	0.45 %

* Per 100

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Graf, Huber set up all-German final

NEW YORK (R) — Three-time champion Steffi Graf restored some semblance of protocol to the upset-ravaged WTA Tour championships on Saturday with a straight sets semifinal victory over Natasha Zvereva of Belarus.

Despite a brief concentration lapse early in the second set, the top-seeded world number one needed just 62 minutes to end the giant killer run of the feisty Zvereva 6-4, 6-3 and set up the first all-German final in the history of the season-ending championships against 12th-ranked Anke Huber.

Huber played a near-perfect match and did a superb job of handling the biggest serve in women's tennis to blitz 14th-ranked Brenda Schultz-McCarthy of the Netherlands 6-3, 6-3, also in 62 minutes.

"She always returns my serve pretty well. I knew this was coming," said Schultz-McCarthy, who upset seventh seed Magdalena Maleeva and second seed Conchita Martinez to reach the semifinals. "She reads my serve pretty good or she just guesses right."

Huber, who committed just one unforced error in the first set, held Schultz-McCarthy to two aces in the second set after the Dutchwoman had drilled 10 in the first — the fastest clocked at 114 miles per hour (183 kph).

"At the beginning I just looked back at them and didn't know where they went," Huber said of her opponent's booming delivery. "But I just got used to it and I got better and better."

Huber, who picked off fourth seed Mary Pierce and fifth seed Kimiko Date to reach the final four.

Saturday's action marked the first time since the tournament adopted its present 16-player format in 1983 that three unseeded players reached the semifinals.

But Graf made quite sure that there would be no all-unseeded final with her impressive win over doubles star and singles upstart

Zvereva. The 15th-ranked Zvereva surprised even herself by upsetting third seed Arantxa Sanchez Vicario in the first round, then had the audacity to pick off New York crowd favourite Gabriela Sabatini, the fifth seed and defending champion, to reach the semis.

Graf, however, raised her career record against Zvereva to a perfect 15-0 and will face a third consecutive opponent who has never beaten her in Huber.

Graf is 9-0 against Huber and now 13-0 against quarter-final victim Mary Joe Fernandez.

Still, the German star, who will go for her ninth title of the year Sunday, insisted she did not take Zvereva lightly. "She's had a great tournament. She was somebody I definitely had to watch out for," said Graf, who won this event in 1987, 1989 and 1993.

Although she lost a service game for the first time in the tournament, Graf was again extremely effective from the service line.

"It's very hard to read where she's going to serve the ball because of the high toss," said a cheerful Zvereva, who said that she did not sleep at all following her big win Friday night over Sabatini.

And then there is Graf's vaunted forehand to deal with.

"Her forehand is a bullet and for me to try to get every single ball to her backhand, it's very hard," Zvereva said.

Graf, who drilled 28 winners to just nine for Zvereva, took the first set on the strength of a single service break in the third game.

In the second set however, Zvereva managed to break Graf in the second game and then held her own serve to love with the help of two of her five aces for a 3-0 lead.

"I lost a little bit of concentration in the beginning of the second set," said the French Open, Wimbledon and U.S. Open champion.

Unfortunately for Zvereva, that just made the



Anke Huber

26-year-old top seed angry.

"I didn't get nervous at all. I got upset with myself," said Graf, who raised her 1995 match record to 47-2.

And an upset Graf is a dangerous Graf. From 0-3 down, she roared through the

next six games, losing a total of just six points along the way.

While Huber was delighted to reach the final, she did not sound much like someone planning a victory celebration — or even like someone who

still had another match to play.

"I had a great tournament," said the 20-year-old Huber.

"I'll just try to play good tennis again and I have nothing to lose."

England win world squash team trophy

CAIRO (R) — England overpowered holders Pakistan to win the World Men's Team Squash Championships on Saturday despite a commanding performance by world number one Jansher Khan.

Jansher pulled Pakistan back into the reckoning with a clinical 9-2, 9-5, 9-4 defeat of fifth-ranked Simon Parke after Del Harris brushed aside Zarak Jahan Khan 9-1, 9-2, 9-2.

But Mark Chaloner made sure of victory for the third seeds in the deciding match, beating Mir Zaman Gul 9-1, 9-3, 10-9 in another one-sided confrontation to topple the 1993 champions.

Gul sparked briefly in the final game, saving two match points and then serving for the game before hitting an attempted drop-shot into the tin to give Chaloner the match and bring the England team celebrating on the court.

But it was Jansher's match which had earlier brought the final to life.

Urged on by flag-waving, cheering supporters, the seven-times world champion had Parke scampering all around the court in a series of long, energy-sapping rallies.

Parke surrendered the first game 9-2 with a handful of unforced errors and then fell behind 6-0 in the second.

He forced his way back into contention, chasing down every ball, to recover to 6-5 after one marathon rally which lasted 110 shots. But Jansher, using his deadly drop-shot sparingly and wearing him down with long rallies to the back of the court, finally took the 40-minute game 9-5.

Jansher then taced on to take the third game 9-4, wrong-footing Parke at least four times as the Englishman visibly tired.

"I don't think I made a mistake in the whole match," just decided to be careful, Jansher said. "I didn't think it would be easy, but I was pretty sure I'd win."

Earlier, hosts Egypt compounded the misery of losing semifinals and top seeds Australia by pushing them into fourth place with a 2-1 victory.

Eighteen-year-old Ahmed Barada drew first blood for Egypt, beating Brett Martin 9-3, 6-9, 9-6, 9-3.

Egyptian captain Amir Wagih then twice came from behind to take his match with Rodney Eyles to a deciding fifth game.

Eyles, who early in the match was picking easy winners off Wagih's serve, never got started in the final game and Wagih overpowered him 9-0 as the home supporters roared their approval for every point Wagih won.

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Q. 1 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

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The bidding has proceeded: NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST 1♠ 1NT 1NT 2♠ 2♠ 3♠ 3♠ 4♠ 4♠ 5♠ 5♠ 6♠ 6♠ 7♠ 7♠ 8♠ 8♠ 9♠ 9♠ 10♠ 10♠ 11♠ 11♠ 12♠ 12♠ 13♠ 13♠ 14♠ 14♠ 15♠ 15♠ 16♠ 16♠ 17♠ 17♠ 18♠ 18♠ 19♠ 19♠ 20♠ 20♠ 21♠ 21♠ 22♠ 22♠ 23♠ 23♠ 24♠ 24♠ 25♠ 25♠ 26♠ 26♠ 27♠ 27♠ 28♠ 28♠ 29♠ 29♠ 30♠ 30♠ 31♠ 31♠ 32♠ 32♠ 33♠ 33♠ 34♠ 34♠ 35♠ 35♠ 36♠ 36♠ 37♠ 37♠ 38♠ 38♠ 39♠ 39♠ 40♠ 40♠ 41♠ 41♠ 42♠ 42♠ 43♠ 43♠ 44♠ 44♠ 45♠ 45♠ 46♠ 46♠ 47♠ 47♠ 48♠ 48♠ 49♠ 49♠ 50♠ 50♠ 51♠ 51♠ 52♠ 52♠ 53♠ 53♠ 54♠ 54♠ 55♠ 55♠ 56♠ 56♠ 57♠ 57♠ 58♠ 58♠ 59♠ 59♠ 60♠ 60♠ 61♠ 61♠ 62♠ 62♠ 63♠ 63♠ 64♠ 64♠ 65♠ 65♠ 66♠ 66♠ 67♠ 67♠ 68♠ 68♠ 69♠ 69♠ 70♠ 70♠ 71♠ 71♠ 72♠ 72♠ 73♠ 73♠ 74♠ 74♠ 75♠ 75♠ 76♠ 76♠ 77♠ 77♠ 78♠ 78♠ 79♠ 79♠ 80♠ 80♠ 81♠ 81♠ 82♠ 82♠ 83♠ 83♠ 84♠ 84♠ 85♠ 85♠ 86♠ 86♠ 87♠ 87♠ 88♠ 88♠ 89♠ 89♠ 90♠ 90♠ 91♠ 91♠ 92♠ 92♠ 93♠ 93♠ 94♠ 94♠ 95♠ 95♠ 96♠ 96♠ 97♠ 97♠ 98♠ 98♠ 99♠ 99♠ 100♠ 100♠ 101♠ 101♠ 102♠ 102♠ 103♠ 103♠ 104♠ 104♠ 105♠ 105♠ 106♠ 106♠ 107♠ 107♠ 108♠ 108♠ 109♠ 109♠ 110♠ 110♠ 111♠ 111♠ 112♠ 112♠ 113♠ 113♠ 114♠ 114♠ 115♠ 115♠ 116♠ 116♠ 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Arab Clubs Table Tennis Championship

Amman bow out to Tunisian champs

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Ahli clubs from Egypt, Qatar and Saudi Arabia remained in the lead and continued their impressive form as the Arab Clubs Table Tennis Championship concluded its third day Sunday.

In the women's competition, titleholders Al Ahli continued their unbeaten streak by eliminating Al Orthodoxi 3-1 in Sunday's evening match. Earlier in the day, Al Ahli overcame Jordan's Amman Club 3-1.

Jordan's Nadia Rashad and Alia Tufaha won the doubles but conceded the match to the eventual winners who are on their way to their fourth title (see separate story below).

In Sunday's last women's match Jordan's Amman Club gave Tunisia's Benzart a hard time before bowing out 3-2.

Benzart's hopes for the title were almost dashed by Al Zamaek who had won 3-0 earlier in the day. Al Zamaek also beat Homentmen with the same result in the evening match.

Competition was also high in the Homentmen (Lebanon)-Orthodoxi (Jordan) match in which Lebanon's No. 1 Jocelyn Track beat Ghadir Amirch and Rania Atiyat in the two singles matches. The doubles match was an exciting one, with Lebanon's 13-year-old Lisa Barikyan displaying the form of a future champion as she teamed up with Track who seemed to lose concentration in the third game of the match.

Atiyat sealed her teams' win with powerful displays. Amireh later beat Barikyan in the singles to secure Al Orthodoxi's first victory.

In the men's matches, Egypt's Al Ahli continued their impressive results defeating Al Orthodoxi 3-0 while compatriots Al Zamaek beat Lebanon's Al Ma'ni with the same result.

Kuwait's Al Jahra beat Palestine 3-1 while Jordan's Al Jazireh lost a crucial match 3-2 to Qatar's Al Ahli.

The 16 teams representing the top players of eight countries will have a rest on Monday.

Only the top two teams of each group in the men's

competition will advance to the semifinals round.

Group A includes Ahli of Egypt, Jordan's Al Orthodoxi, Saudi Arabia's Al Ahli, Kuwait's Al Jahra and Al Khartoum of Sudan.

Al Majma' Al Islami of Palestine.

Group B includes Al Zamaek of Egypt, Qatar's Al Ahli, Al Ma'ni of Lebanon, Jordan's Al Jazireh and Al Khartoum of Sudan.

Standings after Sunday's evening session

Women's Teams	W	L	GF	GA	Pts
Al Ahli (Egypt)	4	—	12	1	8
Zamaek (Egypt)	3	1	9	3	6
Benzart (Tunisia)	3	1	9	6	6
Amman (Jordan)	1	3	6	11	2
Orthodoxi (Jordan)	1	3	5	11	2
Homentmen (Lebanon)	—	4	2	2	—

Men's teams standings after Sunday's morning session

Group A	W	L	GF	GA	Pts
Al Ahli (Egypt)	3	—	9	—	6
Al Ahli (Saudi Arabia)	3	—	9	5	6
Jahra (Kuwait)	2	2	8	4	4
Orthodoxi (Jordan)	—	3	4	9	—
Palestine	—	3	2	9	—

Group B	W	L	GF	GA	Pts
Al Ahli (Qatar)	3	—	9	3	6
Zamaek (Egypt)	3	—	9	—	6
Jazireh (Jordan)	1	2	5	8	4
Ma'ni (Lebanon)	1	3	6	9	2
Khartoum (Sudan)	—	3	—	9	—

Al Ahli set to retain title against expectations

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Although missing the input of two of their top players, women's titleholders Al Ahli of Egypt are dealing very well with the pressure to retain their fourth consecutive title.

Al Ahli Sunday remained the only unbeaten team in the tournament, and judging by their results they seem well on their way towards eventual victory at the fifth women Arab Clubs Table Tennis Championship.

The fact that Al Ahli

have come to Amman with a new team and are currently in a transitional phase had led other teams, especially compatriots Al Zamaek and Tunisia's Benzart, to be hopeful this year would be their turn.

Al Ahli were the undisputed champions in three out of the past four women's championships. This year they are proving they still are a powerful team. Al Ahli beat Al Zamaek 3-0 on the opening day and will play Benzart

Tuesday. Benzart's confidence was shaken with their 3-0 loss to Al Zamaek Sunday.

In an interview with the Jordan Times, Al Ahli's coach Ahmad Nasir seemed confident and happy with his team's results.

"When we first came to this championship, I thought a third place finish would be satisfying. However, our players did better than expected and we are now hopefully playing for the title."

Nasir explained that Al Ahli were this time represented by a new lineup.

"Our No. 1 player, Arab champion Nihal Mshref is expecting a baby any time this week, and Wisam Abdul Fatah is sidelined with injury. So, taking into consideration our new players' lack of experience, I am very optimistic."

Magic lose Hardaway and Grant

MIAMI 191 — The Orlando Magic lost more than a game on Saturday night as Bimbo Coles' three-pointer with 20 seconds to play lifted the Miami Heat to a 93-90 victory over the Magic, who lost penny Hardaway and Horace Grant to knee injuries.

Hardaway and Grant missed the final 3:15 after they were hurt in a loose-ball scramble that involved six players. Grant injured his left knee and was taken out on a portable stretcher while Hardaway, who scored 18 points, left with a muscle cramp in his right leg.

Dennis Scott, who scored 22 points, hit two key baskets to give Orlando a 90-87 lead with 2:32 to play.

Billy Owens finished with 20 points and Alonzo Mourning added 19 for Miami, which also got 16 points and 12 rebounds from Kevin Wilkins.

Orlando reserve Joe Wolf added 16 points, including 10 in the fourth quarter, on 8-of-9 shooting for Orlando.

"It was special to beat them the way they beat us," said Coles, referring to Hardaway's layup with 1.2 seconds left in Orlando's 94-93 win on November 11th. "It hurt me in the heart. Hopefully, this will hurt them the same way."

At Indiana, Reggie Miller scored 15 of his season-high 35 points in the third quarter as the Pacers downed the Seattle SuperSonics 118-104. Shawn Kemp had 27

points, 12 rebounds and nine assists for the Sonics, who dropped their fourth straight at Indiana.

The Pacers trailed 56-52 at halftime but began the third period with a 20-5 burst, including seven by Miller.

At Cleveland, Terrell Brandon scored 26 points, including a jumper with 1:48 to play that snapped a tie and lifted the Cavaliers to a 93-90 victory over the Detroit Pistons.

Chris Mills added 20 for the Cavs, who have won back-to-back games after an 11-7 start and captured their first home game in four tries.

Hill finished with 24 points and Houston added 15 for Detroit, which dropped its eighth straight game at Cleveland.

At Washington, rookie Damon Stoudamire scored 23 points, including a 14-footer with two seconds left that lifted the Toronto Raptors to their first road win in franchise history, a 103-102 victory over the Bulls.

Alvin Robertson added 22

points for Toronto, which blew an 18-point lead before pulling out the victory.

Juwan Howard finished with 25 points and pack added 20 for the Bulls, who lost a chance to win when Calbert Cheaney saw his 14-foot jumper bounce off the rim at the buzzer.

At New Jersey, Armon Gilliam scored 24 points and grabbed 11 rebounds as the Nets routed the Philadelphia 76ers 95-79.

Kevin Edwards scored 13 points and P.J. Brown added 11 for New Jersey, which improved to 4-1 at Brendan Byrne Arena.

Clarence Weatherspoon scored 17 points and Jerry Stackhouse added 16 for Philadelphia (2-0), which has lost four straight by a combined 88 points.

In Houston, Clyde Drexler scored 17 of his 21 points in the second half, including a key three-point play late in the game, as the Rockets defeated the Denver Nuggets 101-97 to extend their winning streak to four games.

Robert Hurry scored 22 points for Houston. Bryant Stuch scored 17 points and Dikembe Mutombo added 15 for Denver.

In San Antonio, Sean Elliott hit two free throws with four seconds remaining as the Spurs handed the Charlotte Hornets their fourth straight loss 109-107.

Elliott finished with 21 points and David Robinson added 27 points and 14 rebounds.

Charlotte's Dell Curry sank three free throws with 20 seconds to play, tying the game 107-107. Larry Johnson missed a 20-footer from the right of the key as time ran out.

Johnson scored 28 points. Curry added 21 and Kendall Gill had 11 points, 12 assists and 10 rebounds for the Hornets.

In Milwaukee, Dino Radja scored 15 of his 21 points in the third quarter as the Boston Celtics defeated the Bucks 99-93.

Eric Williams and Sherman Douglas scored 18 for Boston.

Vin Baker scored 26 points and grabbed nine rebounds and Glenn Robinson added 22 for Milwaukee, which slipped to 2-6.

In Phoenix, Wesley Person came off the bench to score 26 points and Charles Barkley added 20 as the Suns beat the Portland Trail Blazers 107-102.

NBA results

Cleveland	93	Detroit	90
Indiana	118	Seattle	104
Miami	93	Orlando	90
Toronto	103	Washington	102
Utah	126	Minnesota	103
New Jersey	95	Philadelphia	79
Houston	101	Denver	97
Boston	99	Milwaukee	93
San Antonio	109	Charlotte	107
Phoenix	107	Portland	102
Golden State	121	Dallas	108

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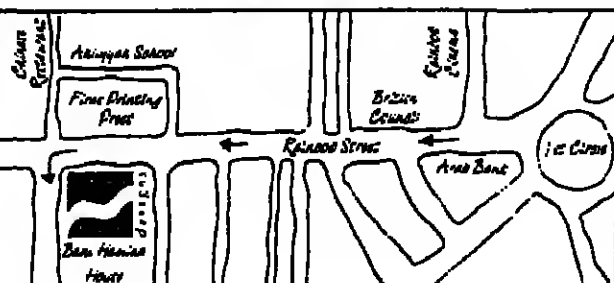
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Becker blasts Chang

FRANKFURT (AFP) — Boris Becker roared back from 2-5 down in the opening set to crush Michael Chang 7-6 (7-3), 6-0, 7-6 (7-5) and win the \$3.3 million ATP Tour championship for the second time Sunday.

The 27-year-old thrilled a 9,000 crowd at the Festhalle with a superb display against Chang which earned the German a year-end No. 4 computer ranking.

Becker added a second Frankfurt title to the Masters crown he won in 1988 at the season wrap-up. The treble Wimbledon champion and tennis icon in his home country added 1.225 million to his bank account in prize money.

Chang saved the first of two match points for Becker when the German slapped a forehand out. But on the next point, Becker fired over his 24th ace of the afternoon to clinch victory.

Chang and Becker will change places in Monday's year-end computer rankings, with the American dropping to fifth in the world. Pete Sampras, Andre Agassi and French Open holder Thomas Muster finish 1995 as the top three on the tour.

Becker found it difficult to get started as Chang broke for 2-0 in the opening set of the best-of-five sets title match. But the German quickly found his groove, breaking back for 4-5 and taking the opening set on a tiebreaker.

From then on, Becker was unstoppable, firing over a service winner on his first set point. He swept through the second set to love against a frustrated Chang who was out of his mind in the third set, losing to victory in two hours, 16 minutes.

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Denzel Washington
Jene Hackman ... in
CRIMSON TIDE
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Sylvester Stallone...in
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Afghan army, Taliban fight for fourth day near Kabul

BAND-1-GHAZI, Afghanistan (AFP) — Afghan state troops and the Taliban forces traded heavy missile, artillery and rocket fire for the fourth straight day east of Kabul on Sunday, amid contradictory claims of the outcome.

Kabul government officials said troops loyal to President Burhanuddin Rabbani beat off the Taliban attempt to tighten their siege of the city.

However, a spokesman for Taliban from the southwestern Pakistani city of Quetta denied the claim, saying the Taliban were firmly in control of at least seven new positions they seized near Kabul from the government troops in two days of fighting on Friday and Saturday.

But reporters said that the village of Butkhak — eight kilometres from Pul-i-Charkhi — which the Taliban sources had claimed was under their control, was Sunday firmly in government hands and out of range even of rebel artillery.

Had the Taliban claims been true, defence ministry sources here conceded that such a situation would have been "a disaster" for the government.

They added that 24 Taliban were killed and 27 injured in the latest battle, while five government troops were wounded.

The government Sunday fired a constant barrage of Soviet-made BM 21 missiles.

rockets and tank rounds at the Taliban — who were dug in seven kilometres south of this frontline position, 25 kilometres southeast of Kabul.

The Afghan air force also dropped cluster bombs on the Taliban positions as part of the government counter-offensive following Thursday's massive Taliban attack on the eastern flank of Kabul.

The Islamist militia deployed 1,000 men, up to 20 tanks, and fired volleys of missiles and rockets at state soldiers, top military commanders said.

The Taliban move was aimed at cutting round to the east of Kabul in a bid to gain a military and logistical stranglehold on the beleaguered government of President Rabbani by broadening their month-old siege of Kabul, defence officials said.

The religious fighters Sunday returned the government salvos in fire fights which had lasted through the night, as the battle entered its fourth consecutive day, military leaders said.

The sound of frantic military activity dominated the government front lines as troops battled the so-called "religious students" Sunday.

Nearly however, farmers continued to plough their land with medieval equipment in this land weary from

16 years of almost constant war.

The defence ministry and military commanders say the Taliban seized eight kilometres of territory in their initial onslaught, but added that all but about two kilometres was won back early Saturday.

A senior government commander stressing that a major Taliban offensive had been repulsed said "we are now forcing them to withdraw totally from all positions they have occupied over the past days."

"The enemy is still trying to resist but is weakening and is slowly withdrawing," a senior government commander, General Bismillah, said.

In Pakistan Taliban spokesman Mohammad Afghani, said Rabbani troops tried to capture the Taliban positions but their two offensives were "repulsed," claiming to have crossed some of the hills overlooking Kabul including Butkhak ridges.

"We have also captured some areas near the city's civilian airport," he said. But he admitted that Pul-i-Charkhi town was held by the other side.

The Taliban, who have been besieging Kabul on three major fronts since October, have vowed to topple Rabbani's three-year-old government and to install Islamic law across the country.



CELEBRATIONS: His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Sunday attended a celebration by the Hawait tribes at Husseinah north of Ma'an to celebrate His Majesty King Hussein's 60th birthday. Addressing the celebration, among others, Nawras Faisal Ben Jazi, reviewed Jordan's achievements under King Hussein's rule and praised Prince Hassan's role in the Kingdom's quest for

progress and prosperity. He pledged the Huwaitat's allegiance to the Hashemite leadership. The celebration was attended by Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, King Hussein's Advisor for Tribal Affairs Sharif Fawwaz Zaben Abdullah, Ma'an governor, King Hussein and Prince Hassan's advisors, in addition to deputies from the southern badia region.

Government appoints committee to investigate Rabin's assassination, bars Jewish extremists Israeli right fends off accusations

From P.V. Vivekanand in West Jerusalem

MEDIA REVELATIONS that the leader of an extremist Israeli group was a paid agent of the main security agency of the country have boosted the hands of the Israeli right in its battle against accusations that it had paved the ground for the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

While it is too early to see how the affair is going to affect the Israeli political scene and the chances of acting Prime Minister Shimon Peres in the next general elections in November, the right wing is using the reports to fight back assertions that it had contributed to the assassination.

In a country long known for secret wheelings and dealings involving politicians and secret services, the allegations are serious, and some of the questions would most likely remain unanswered.

The main Israeli internal security agency, General Security Services or Shin Bet, has dismissed reports that Avishai Rabin, head of the Eyal group to which confessed Rabin assassin Yigal Amir belonged, was a paid Shin Bet agent for nearly two years.

But the right wing and the settler movement in the occupied territories have picked up on the reports, and are now suggesting that the Shin Bet has planted several other agents among "nationalist" Israeli groups to incite extremists to stage violent actions to undermine the peace accord with the Palestinians.

Mr. Rabin was arrested shortly after the Nov. 4 assassination of Mr. Rabin at a Tel Aviv peace rally, but was released, and since kept under house arrest, a few days later.

Israel Channel 2 Television reported Saturday that Mr. Rabin was arrested because he failed to warn Shin Bet about Amir and his intention to assassinate Mr. Rabin. The television report added, however, that interrogators had concluded that other extremists suspected that Mr. Rabin was a mole for several months, and, as such, did not confide in him about Amir's plans.

According to Yediot Ahronot daily, Amir's name did not appear in any list of extremists and that it itself has opened the door for a multitude of theories, including one that says that "radical elements" within Shin Bet had somehow colluded with the assassin.

The report appeared to have given the Israeli right the right to boost its bid to look for a fight off charges that its description and portrayal of Mr. Rabin as a "traitor who betrayed Israel's cause" by returning land to the Arabs had set the stage for extremists to mount an attack on the prime minister.

The extent to which the Israeli right would go to clutch any straw in its defence is clear in the way its leaders are using the allegations.

Rabbi Benny Alon, a member of the right-wing Moleket Party — an avowed opponent of the peace accord signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) — contended in comments published Sunday that the Shin Bet had not simply planned Mr. Rabin's assassination.

"I would venture to say that the whole organisation and its activities, including the posters depicting Rabin in as SS uniform, were all paid for" by Shin Bet, Rabbi Alon was quoted as saying by the Israeli national agency ITIM.

He also claimed that he "knew, and many people knew, that the one working more closely with Rabin was Yigal Amir."

Aliza Goren, media advisor to Mr. Peres, was equally emphatic in the government's rejection of the charges. "All attempts to connect Avishai Rabin and the Eyal organisation to sources in the GSS (Shin Bet) are incorrect," said Ms. Goren.

Police Minister Moshe Shahal was more explicit in rejecting the right wing's charges that Shin Bet had employed any of the suspects in the Rabin assassination as an informant.

"There was no confirmation by the (Shin Bet) about this item and as much as I know they denied it entirely," Reuters quoted Mr. Shahal as saying.

According to political analysts here, damage has already been done to the Shin Bet, and, by extension, to the

Labour-led government itself simply because the agency, along with the external secret service, Mossad, comes directly under the control of the prime minister.

At least three Shin Bet officers have either resigned or been suspended as a result of the charges.

The charge that a government agency failed to protect Mr. Rabin is painful to Israelis who are still mourning the death of the general-turned-politician who was seen by most moderates as Israel's newfound symbol of peace with the Arabs.

Media commentators here argue that unless the Labour government acted swiftly to convincingly quell the charges, more damage will be done.

In its effort to contain the damage, the cabinet on Sunday ordered a crack down on Jewish extremists and launched a formal probe into the assassination.

The measures include unspecified moves to eliminate subversive Jewish groups and prevent their supporters from immigrating to Israel.

Interior Minister Ehud Barak implicitly conceded that the government could have done better earlier. "It is the right wing to do at the right moment," Mr. Barak was quoted as saying by Reuters.

"We can only be sorry that the government did not do some of these things before."

AP Adds: Israel's cabinet, meanwhile, dealt with the broader issue of Jewish terrorism, announcing plans to bar Jewish extremists from entering Israel and to disband subversive groups.

"The government declares that extremist, violent, racist and terrorist organisations pose a great threat to the democratic regime of Israel," said a cabinet statement.

"The government will not permit Jews from abroad to come to Israel as immigrants, tourists, residents or citizens if they express support or for organisations which have been outlawed or if they have expressed support have supported acts of violence," it said.

In the past, Israel's government outlawed anti-Arab groups such as Kach and took Jews away from a few dozen Jewish settlers. But the activists never stayed in jail for very long and were not re-

garded as a threat to public safety.

Acting Prime Minister Shimon Peres formed a team to coordinate efforts against incitement and sedition. Officials from the army, police, Shin Bet and attorney-general's office will participate.

Security sources said the commission heard from a three-member team that conducted an internal investigation for the Shin Bet.

The internal report concluded that Mr. Rabin did not have enough bodyguards and that his protectors failed to keep civilians out of secure areas such as the one around his car.

The commission was also expected to look into the intelligence breakdown and find out why the Shin Bet failed to follow up on tips that an assassination was planned. The Shin Bet admitted in a statement it had received information on assassination plans along with description that fit the gunman.

A heated debate broke out during the cabinet meeting among ministers seeking information on who leaked Mr. Rabin's connections to the Shin Bet, Israel radio reported.

Cabinet Secretary Shmuel Hollander confirmed that some ministers raised questions about Mr. Rabin being a Shin Bet informer during the cabinet meeting. But Mr. Peres told the ministers they should let the commission of inquiry do its job and refrain from making statements, Mr. Hollander said.

In a move apparently aimed at some Jewish settlers' groups and religious bodies, the cabinet statement also said state funding would be cut off to institutions headed by those who preach racism and violence.

The commission, which has the power to recommend dismissals and other disciplinary action, is headed by retired Supreme Court Chief Justice Meir Shamgar and has a relatively narrow mission to investigate security measures surrounding Mr. Rabin and the intelligence failure.

Also on the panel are Zvi Zamir, former head of the Mossad intelligence agency, and Ariel Rosen-Zvi, dean of the Tel Aviv University law faculty.

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Diplomats told Reuters that the ambassador's driver was also killed in the accident. His wife, who was seriously injured in the accident, also arrived in Amman Sunday, and will remain in hospital until she leaves to Thailand Wednesday.

Reuters news agency said the services were attended by a priest from the Vatican embassy in Baghdad.

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Hamas forms political party

GAZA CITY (AFP) — The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, is preparing to set up a political party called the "Islamic National Salvation Party," a senior official of the movement said Sunday.

"The Islamic National Salvation Party will be announced in the coming days," said Ahmad Al Sahati.

"This party is not coming from the Hamas movement but it will include ex-members of Hamas and will be open to all Palestinians including Christians, if they want," he told journalists at the Islamic University in Gaza, a stronghold of the militant movement.

Another militant leader, Ahmad Bahr, refused to say whether the party would be linked to Hamas, the main opposition group to Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat and which has carried out dozens of attacks on Israelis in the past two years.

"The creation of a political party could be announced in the coming days. It will be an Islamic party," Mr. Bahr told AFP.

In a statement, Hamas repeated it was boycotting the first Palestinian elections set for Jan. 20.

"We confirm that we will not be taking part and we call on all the Islamic and national forces to boycott them," the statement faxed to AFP said.

"Hamas cannot accept the continuation of the occupation and it will continue to resist it by all means at its disposal to expel the occupiers and free the Palestinian land which has been violated."

Mr. Arafat has launched moves to try to persuade Hamas to take part in the elections and to make it give up its armed fight against the Israelis.

Talks are due to take place soon but the two sides have not yet agreed whether they will be in Khartoum or Cairo, and Hamas has accused the self-rule authority of wasting time.

Mr. Arafat appealed Sunday during a landmark visit to newly-autonomous Jenin on the West Bank for all Palestinians to take part in the elections.

period in October, suspending a wave of deportations which sent thousands of Palestinians out of their homes in Libya.

"The Libyan position stipulates that the Palestinians must return in stages once the six months set by Qadhafi pass, and they must be given a choice of destination," Mr. Hijazi said at the Arab League headquarters in Cairo.

"Our country plans to repatriate all the Palestinians in stages and in cooperation with the league which is playing the role of a mediator" with the Palestinian self-rule authority.

Before the expulsion campaign was launched in September, some 30,000 Palestinians lived in Libya.

Mr. Qadhafi said he wanted to show what he called the failure of PLO leader Yasser Arafat's self-rule accords with Israel to set a viable homeland for the Palestinians.

Interior ministry said Sunday. Interior Minister Ebad Barak ordered the investigation after revelations in the daily Yediot Aharonot. Identity papers, Israeli passports and transit papers were allegedly sold to Palestinians allowing them to move freely in Israel and abroad, the paper reported. Some of the documents fell into the hands of militants from the Islamic resistance movement Hamas which has carried out most of the anti-Israeli attacks in the past two years. Haim Ben Ahar, the head of the office in annexed East Jerusalem which delivers the papers, blamed Ifnan Alami, the sister of a Hamas activist who could sign papers and had access to classified information, the paper said. She was fired several months ago by Ben Ahar after pressure from the interior ministry. A deputy from the rightwing opposition Likud Party, Yeshuha Matza, said Sunday that such "corrupt practices" had endangered the lives of Israelis. He announced he would call a meeting of the interior ministry parliamentary committee on Tuesday to look into the affair.

Speedy verdict on Brotherhood trials

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt's high military court announced it would rule Thursday in the case of 33 members of the fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood, on the same day as a second trial against the banned group, legal sources said. The court will also give its verdict in the first case against 49 Brothers. One of the accused is a defendant in both trials. On Sunday, the court at Hukstep military base north of the Egyptian capital heard the closing defence arguments of the 33 and announced the ruling date, the sources said. President Hosni Mubarak has come under fire for sending the 81 Brotherhood members, who face life imprisonment if found guilty, to military court which usually judges cases connected to Islamic militant unrest.

'Militants sold Israeli identity papers'

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israel has opened an inquiry after civil servants allegedly sold Israeli identity papers to Palestinians including armed militants, the

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraqi air force captain defects to Kuwait

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwaiti police arrested an Iraqi air force captain who defected to the Gulf state on Saturday, a newspaper reported on Sunday. Interior Ministry officials said they were checking the report and did not confirm or deny it. "Border security men at the ministry of interior arrested an Iraqi air force captain ... as he was attempting to infiltrate into the country," said Al Anbaa newspaper. The 35-year-old officer, who crossed the northern border of Kuwait wearing his military uniform, told investigators he defected due to "the tragic situation in Iraq," it said. "He said the Iraqi regime executed most of his family members." Another Iraqi air force captain defected to the Gulf state in October with his wife and child. There has been an upsurge in Iraqis arriving in Kuwait since two Iraqi inner-circle officials defected to Jordan in August.

Mrs. Rabin invited to the Vatican

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Pope John Paul II has invited the widow of slain Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to visit the Vatican in December, state radio reported on Sunday. The invitation to Leah Rabin came via a Holy See representative based in Tel Aviv. On the eve of the talks on Dec. 13, she will take part in a ceremony in Rome organised by the Italian government in memory of her husband, gunned down by a Jewish fanatic Nov. 4 at a peace rally. Her husband only met the Pope once in March 1994 at the Holy See, when Mr. Rabin asked for his help in the peace process.

'Militants sold Israeli identity papers'

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3rd passenger train attacked in s. Egypt

CAIRO (AP) — Suspected Muslim militants opened fire on a passenger train en route to Cairo, killing an Egyptian man and wounding another, police said Sunday.

It was the third attack on a train in Qena province since Nov. 8 and raised fears that Muslim extremists were again trying to target the country's tourism industry, one of its largest earners of foreign currency.

The latest incident occurred late Saturday night, when a train en route from the southern tourist city of Aswan was raked by gunfire as it passed through the village of Bahgoura in Qena province, security officials said.

Police set up roadblocks and searched for the attackers. Sixteen men were

arrested for questioning, the officials said. They spoke on condition of anonymity.

Guns fired on two trains near the village of Farshout in Qena province on Nov. 8 and 9. Thirteen people were hurt, including a German and a French tourist.

Al Gamaa Al Islamiya, or the Islamic group, claimed responsibility for the Nov. 8 attack and warned tourists to leave Egypt or risk losing their lives.

The group, which also claimed responsibility Sunday for a car bomb attack on the Egyptian embassy in Pakistan that killed at least 13 people, has been blamed for much of the violence in a 3½ year campaign by Muslim militants to overthrow Egypt's secular government.

COLUMN

Spanish police seize 50 kilos of cocaine

MADRID (R) — Spanish police Saturday seized nearly 50 kilograms of cocaine at Madrid's Barajas Airport, one of Spain's biggest drugs hauls in recent years. Police said the cocaine was found by sniffer dogs in two suitcases on a flight from Bogota, the Colombian capital. Three Spaniards and a Mexican were arrested. The cocaine was hidden in false bottoms in the suitcases, as well as in 13 bags of coffee and bottles of shampoo. The haul was estimated to have a street value of \$40 million.

Singapore extends smoking ban to new places

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Life will become more difficult for smokers in Singapore from Dec. 1 when a no-puffing rule is extended to new areas in the city-state known for its tough laws against lighting up in public places. From that date smoking will be prohibited in all air-conditioned shopping malls, underground pedestrian walkways and all queues of two or more people, Acting Environment Minister Teo Chee Hean announced Saturday. And over time, officials said, smoking will be banned in nightspots including discotheques, bars and karaoke lounges that now remain the last refuge for smokers. "The extension of the smoking prohibition to these new areas will further protect non-smokers from the harmful effects of second-hand tobacco smoke," Mr. Teo said. The ban is one more step in the anti-tobacco campaign started by the island republic in 1970 when smoking was prohibited in cinemas, theatres and buses. Over the years, smokers have been stopped from lighting up in taxis, hospitals, supermarkets, elevators, bowling alleys and air-conditioned offices, factories and food centres.

How to keep your ears clean — and other APEC tips

OSAKA, Japan (R) — How do you host a huge regional summit and ensure your 1,000-plus telephones stay clean? Ask Japan's telecommunications giant Kokusai Denzetsu Denwa. At the KDD stall in the Osaka Expo Hall harried reporters getting their ears bent by irate editors can pick up free "mumikaki" — pretty little bamboo sticks that scoop out ear-wax. The ultra-modern press centre, where Osakans come to listen to rock stars like Eric Clapton, now has buttoned-down officials droning from communiques on giant television screens. The stadium's lights bounce off the dazzling kimono of a half-dozen young ladies who wait forlornly to demonstrate the tea ceremony near a tiny rock garden. Thwarted by tight security? The 1,500 international reporters chasing officials of the 18-member Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum can drag themselves to the cafeteria. Journalists are pried with free food and drink all day, cup noodles with hot water on tap, and endless pots of coffee. The freebies abound as the world's second-richest nation wows the press. An Osaka Philharmonic Orchestra compact disc, a T-shirt with Bunraku puppets emblazoned on it, a tiny FM radio ... But unlike the Group of Seven summit that Tokyo hosted two years ago, there is no thermometer to measure fevered imaginations.